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A TRIP TO KASHMIR



H. H. MAHARAJA SIR PERTAB SINGH INDAR MAHINDAR BAHADUR
SITAR-I-SULTANAT, G.C.S.I.



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TRIP TO KASHMIR

BY

JAMES ARBUTHNOT.

Calcutta:
THACKER, SPINK & CO.
1900.

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PREFACE.

THIS does not aspire to be a guide, though the reader will find a considerable amount of useful information in it should he meditate a visit to Kashmir. The contents of this little book are simply stories of trips to Kashmir, most of which were for purposes of sport, and many of these stories have already been told in the *Asian* and the *Empress*. People have been good enough, not only to read them, but to say they enjoyed them; if such is the case, perhaps others may do likewise.

It would be easy to write many volumes regarding Kashmir. There is first of all its history, a country that has experienced such a variety of Rulers, which has been in turn Buddhist, Mahomedan, Hindoo, Sikh; sometimes one and sometimes another as to its Rulers, while the population has more or less remained Mahomedan, cannot but have a curious history—a history of slavery and oppression, ground down first by one rule, then by another, till they were actually christened “*zulin parast*,” or worshippers of tyranny, till they had been forced to believe that he who sows was the last man who should reap any advantage from his labours, and that not only their labour but their very life belonged to their oppressors; such a country cannot fail to have plenty history to write about.

Then there is the Geology about which there is a most interesting chapter in Mr. Lawrence's "Valley of Kashmir." The Flora also, one could hardly imagine a more perfect garden of happiness for the Botanist than the Valley of Kashmir and its frame of verdure-covered mountains. The races and tribes, the political history, the various languages, the industries, all are well worthy of extensive notice, but all require a master pen to do them justice; every man to his own hobby, and mine is sport, sport perhaps in somewhat a broad meaning, for it is not necessarily the slaughter of the animal which interests me. There is, I think, infinitely greater pleasure to be derived from the stalk, from, by care and cuteness, being able to outwit him and get within shot, than from seeing a noble monarch of the mountains struck down by a well-placed bullet; that is the realization and, like in most other pastimes, the pleasure of the realization seldom comes up to the pleasure of the anticipation. Life amongst the grand country in which Ibex, Markhor, &c., are to be found is in itself sport, the delight of finding with one's telescope a head which you estimate as better than any you have shot yet. The anxious enquiry you make after the *shikari* has taken his survey, the sanguine guess, "chalis inch walla"? (40-inch chap), the delight which the expected answer *jasti* (more) gives, then the discussion as to the route of the stalk, all this is to most sportsmen actually more pleasure than the sight of the animal lying dead; but on the other hand should you *fail* in the shot, after having accomplished successfully the stalk, few miseries can be greater, far, far less is the



disappointment of failing in the stalk, for there one always has an excuse, a watchful female sentry, an eddy of wind the wrong way, a disturbed Ram Chikhor, or something of that sort, besides if you miss, you have to bear the blame alone, whereas in the failure of the stalk the *shikari* is an accomplice, and does not look at you in a reproachful way and say *his kismet* is bad ! Sport then in the abstract is my theme, and stories of my experiences in search of that cannot but introduce from time to time yarns of the people amongst whom my wanderings took me, and rapturous attempts to convey some faint idea of the lovely country through which I went, for probably a sportsman sees more of the actual wild beauty of Nature than any one else ; he sees it in its best by the necessary early hours he keeps, where everything is in its virgin purity of dawn, before it becomes coarsened by the full light of day. My illustrations are possibly faulty as to artistic merit, or as to photographer's art, but they have the advantage of being true, untouched by brush and free from photographic tricks ; they are an amateur's work and representations of what he saw and what struck him as worth recording. For one or two of the photographs I have indented on Messrs. Bourne & Shepherd's excellent collection, and for one very beautiful little picture I am indebted to Mr. Scott, the well-known artist, who has kindly allowed me to reproduce his "Natimar Canal, Srinagar."



DEDICATION.

THE fact that this is only a little book does not relieve it from the necessity of a dedication ; in fact the smallness and the weakness of it make it all the more necessary to provide for it a trustee, and in that capacity who could be more suitable than Mr. Walter Lawrence, for there is no one who has done more, or indeed anything like so much, for the lasting good of the country of Kashmir, than Mr. Lawrence did during his residence there as Settlement Officer. I say the country of Kashmir, and that term I intend to include all the dwellers in Kashmir, from the Maharaja to the humblest peasant, all now derive the benefits of that wise and judicious land settlement, and I therefore, with due respect, dedicate my "Trip to Kashmir"

TO

WALTER R. LAWRENCE, C.I.E.,

late I.C.S.



INTRODUCTION.

WHILE every one, in writing of Kashmir, dwells enthusiastically on the description of the beauties of the country, it has always seemed to me a want of courtesy that few take much notice of the hospitality of its Ruler. When I first visited the country in 1877 I was the guest of the Maharaja Ranbir Singh, who did his utmost in every way to make my stay a pleasant one. How well he succeeded is shown by my having spent nine months in the country. The present Maharaja and his two younger brothers were but boys then, but my more recent visits have shown me that His Highness the Maharaja Pertab Singh is a true son of his father, and follows in his footsteps as far as hospitality is concerned. By his system of government he makes everything easy and pleasant for those who visit his country, and nowhere in the sixty odd thousand square miles over which he rules can the visitor find anything but civility and marching made easy by the excellent rules laid down for the providing of coolies, milk, butter, eggs and such like, while the bungalows on the Murree road are evidence that the traveller is welcome.

While enjoying the beauty of the country therefore let us not forget a feeling of gratitude to the Ruler who heartily welcomes all comers, and I consider his picture is the most suitable frontispiece to this little volume.

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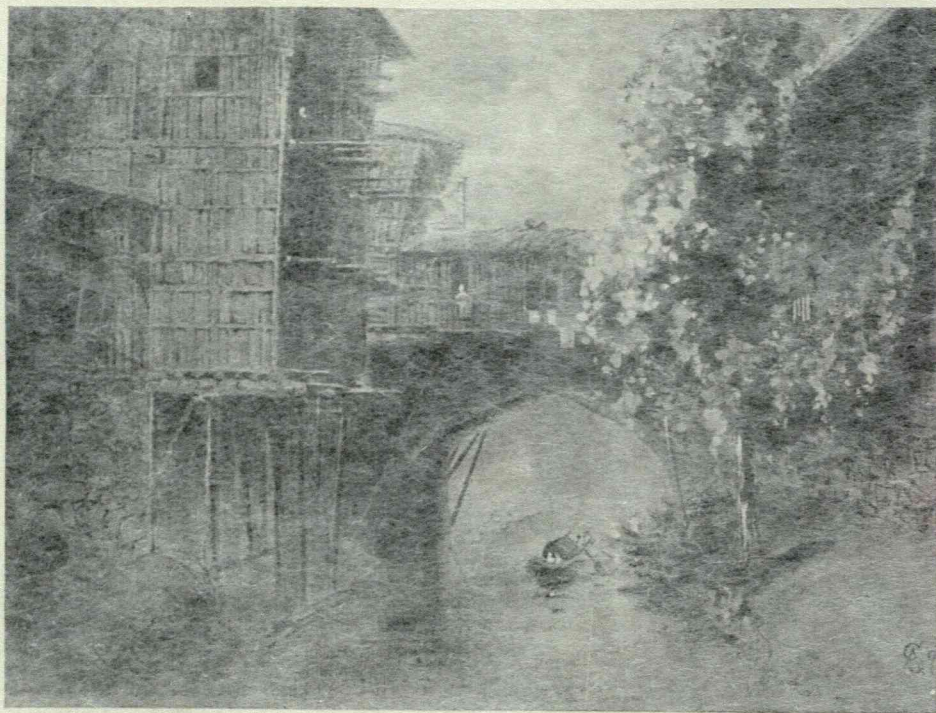
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Natimar Canal, Srinagar			

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Natimar Canal, Srinagar, Kashmir.



A TRIP TO KASHMIR.

CHAPTER I.

PREPARATIONS, ROUTE AND EXPENSES.

Who has not heard of the Vale of Cashmere ;
With its roses the brightest that earth ever gave,
Its temples, and grottos, and fountains as clear
As the love lighted eyes that hang o'er their wave ?
Oh to see it at sunset,—when warm o'er the Lake,
Its splendour at parting a summer eve throws,
Then the shrines through the foliage are gleaming half shown,
And each hallows the hour by some rites of its own.

Moore's Lalla Rookh.



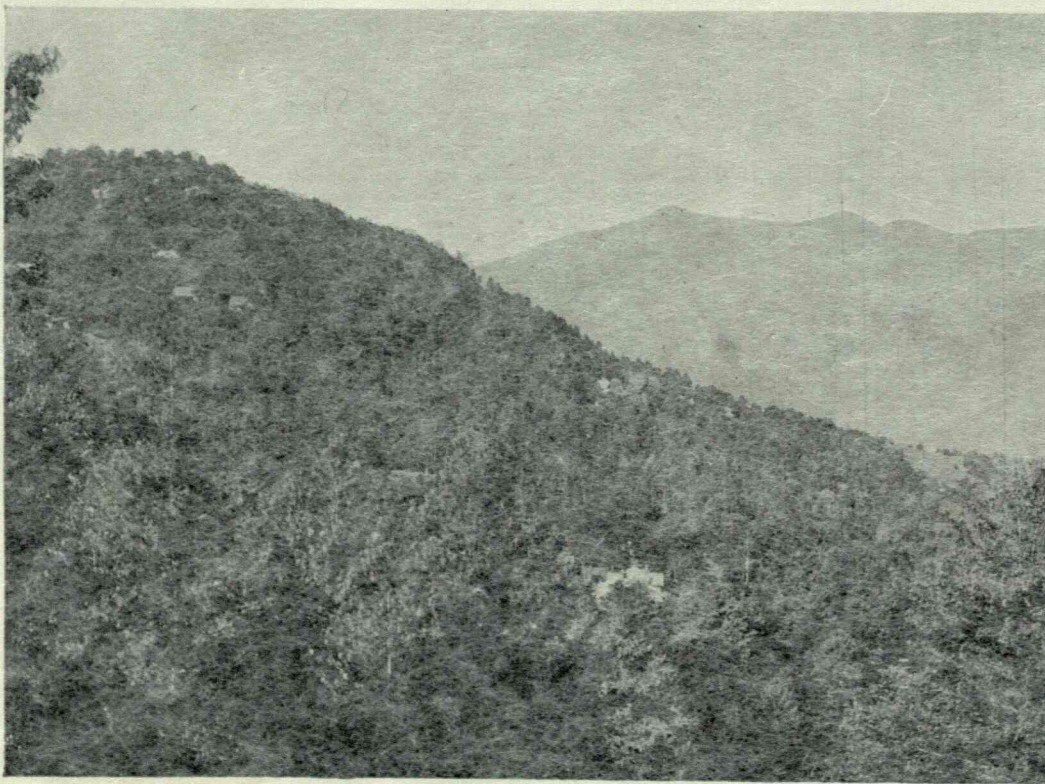
PROBABLY few people, who have not visited it, have any idea what a lovely country we have on the Northern frontier of India. The Valley of Kashmir has been made, within recent years, so easy of access that a visit to that country is becoming quite a popular form of holiday for those who cannot afford the time, or possibly the money, for a trip home. As regards cheapness, it

is true, that Kashmir is not what it was twenty years ago; then a pass was required to enter the country, and only about a hundred of these were issued. In 1898 the number of visitors exceeded 2,000. In the olden time the visitors were mostly military men, or civilians stationed in the North-West Provinces, who found it a convenient, pleasant, and cheap place to spend their leave; but few "globe trotters," as we term those who visit India for pleasure



A Landslip.

only, found their way there, and consequently living was cheap. In those days a sheep cost one rupee, the same coin would buy twelve or sixteen good fowls; and a few annas would buy all the eggs in a village. Now one has to pay anything from Rs. 3 to Rs. 5 for a sheep, about half a rupee for two fowls, and eggs are often unobtainable; it all depends whether one is near or far from the beaten track.



Murree Looking towards the Plains.

A Trip to Kashmir.

3

The cost of transport is regulated by the Durbar, and remains the same as it used to be, namely, four annas per march, which cannot be considered excessive for carrying a load of fifty to sixty pounds for ten or twelve miles over mountains. Six annas is charged for snow marches.

Even at the higher prices now charged for certain articles, a trip to Kashmir is not an expensive one ; two people can do them-



Over it with Dry Feet.

selves well, and have a thoroughly good holiday of three months for about Rs. 2,000, including railway fare and everything necessary, from the day they leave Calcutta. This is a very full estimate and, with a little care and knowledge of housekeeping, it would probably be cut down to Rs. 1,500. The annexed summary of expenses may be of use to intending visitors to Kashmir.*

* See page 11.

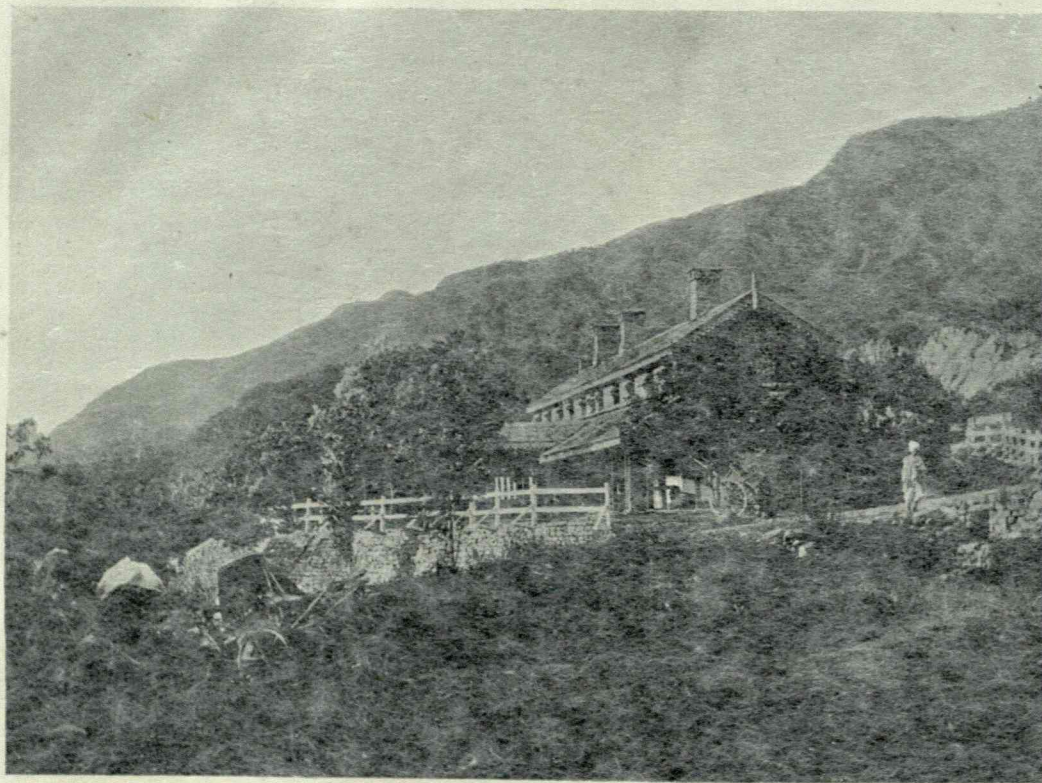
A Trip to Kashmir.

The journey from Calcutta to Rawal Pindi occupies 52 hours. Leaving by the Punjab mail in the evening, one arrives at Rawal Pindi at 2 A.M., on the third morning. The special tonga, which it is necessary to order in advance from Messrs. Danjibhoy & Co., Rawal Pindi, will be found in waiting at the station; where also will be found comfortable dressing-rooms, refreshment-rooms, &c., &c. A start should be made as soon as it is daylight, travelling



A Tonga—Changing Horses.

in the dark not being permitted. A tonga is a low two-wheeled trap, strongly made to suit the roads, which are in some parts considerably cut up, especially in the spring, when the streams are swollen by the melting snow, and landslips a frequent occurrence; these carriages, though somewhat rough, are not altogether uncomfortable.



Domel Dak Bungalow.

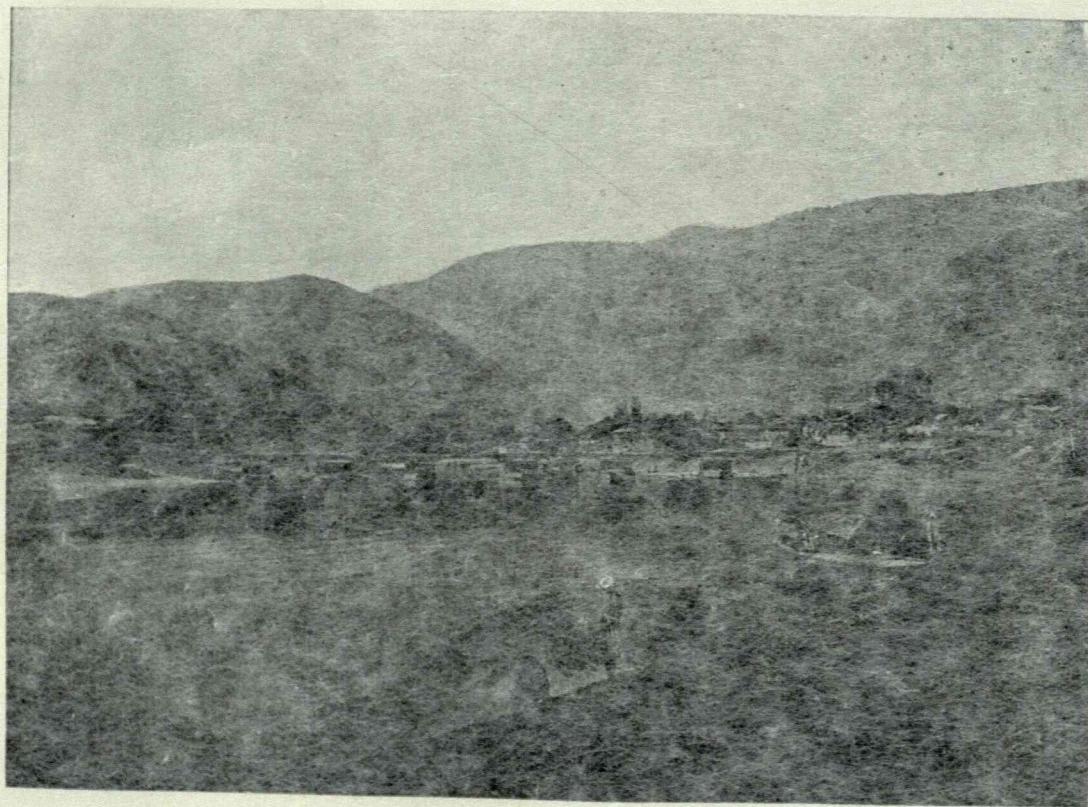


Photo by Bourne & Shepherd.

Baramula Bridge.

*A Trip to Kashmir.*

5

A special tonga will take three passengers, besides their bedding and a small bag or dressing box each, containing such change of clothing as may be required on the journey. If only two occupy the tonga, more baggage can be taken. As the bedding goes on the top, two waterproof sheets will be found very useful, for even the best of hold-alls will not keep the contents dry in heavy rain. *Ekkas* can be got at the station; probably one will suffice to take the extra baggage required by two people, besides one servant. In selecting a servant to take, it is advisable to get a good all-round man, who will act as *bearer* and *kitmatgar*, and can cook a little if required. With such a man to form the nucleus of an establishment, the remainder can be got in Kashmir.

It is not necessary to stop at Murree at all; the Kashmir road branches off about two miles short of the actual town of Murree, but it is, in many ways, more comfortable to make the first halt there. The *ekka* and servant can then be sent on ahead, and a certainty can be made of reaching Gurhi the next night.

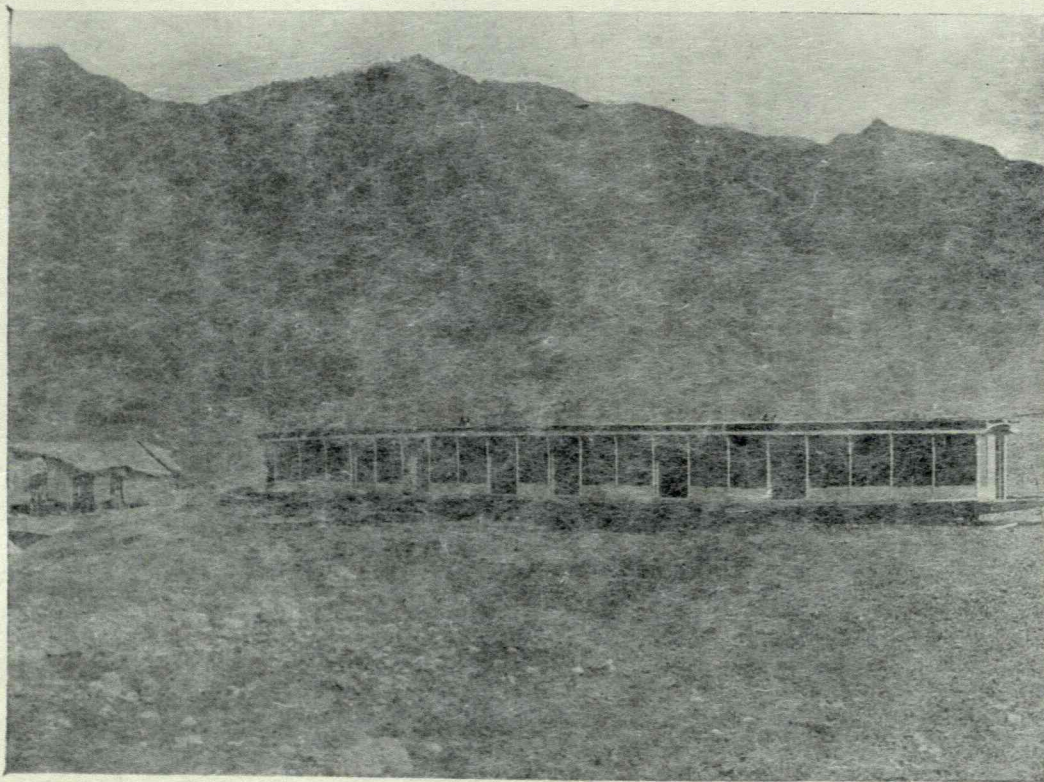
Five hours from Rawal Pindi (about forty miles) brings one to Murree, a hill station 7,600 ft. above the sea, where there are many comfortable hotels—always full to over-flowing during the hot-weather months, but deserted and shut up in winter. The first part of the road is over level dusty country, and should be done in the early morning.

The Maharajah has built handsome dāk bungalows for the accommodation of travellers, from ten to sixteen miles apart. These bungalows are of the greatest use, as they save the necessity



of carrying camp kit. A nominal charge of one rupee is made for each visitor occupying a room, and servants are kept who provide meals.

Having ascertained that the road is "all clear," and no landslips, an early start should be made from Murree. The first twenty-seven miles are all down hill, twisting in and out of the various spurs running down towards the valley of the Jhelum, through barren and unpicturesque country, and is somewhat tedious. In about four and a half hours Kohala is reached ; here there is a dāk bungalow, where a fair tiffin can be had; it is a very hot place, and no longer a stay than is absolutely necessary should be made there. After leaving the bungalow, one crosses the Jhelum by a handsome suspension bridge, and enters the country of Kashmir. Twelve miles from Kohala is the dāk bungalow of Dulai—a neat, solid little house, beautifully situated close to the river ; ten miles further is Domel, also a comfortable bungalow ; but, during the months of June to October, it is advisable to push on twelve miles further and spend the first night at Gurhi, as anywhere short of this it may be found uncomfortably hot. Gurhi is a most comfortable resting-place. And having arrived so far, the rest of the journey may be taken in easier stages, for excessive heat is not likely to trouble the traveller. At Gurhi, close to the bungalow, there is one of the old rope bridges over the Jhelum, which at one time were common in Kashmir, but which are now becoming rare. Starting next day after breakfast, twenty miles brings you to Chikoti, a wretched bungalow, but good enough for tiffin ; from there it is



House-Boat and Doonga.



A Boat's Crew.



fourteen miles to Uri, where there is about the best bungalow on the road, with an excellent old *khansamah*, who does his very utmost for his guests. There the second night should be spent; the third day is a very short stage—only thirty miles. Rampore is a poor bungalow, and it is best to leave Uri about 8 A.M., and go straight on to Baramula before lunch.

The road follows the river Jhelum all the way after leaving Kohala, sometimes winding round the side of the hills far above it, at others close beside its roaring torrent. The scenery is amazingly varied, at first somewhat bare and rocky, later on running through more cultivated districts—picturesque little villages that seem to be literally clinging to the mountain side far above, surrounded by a few fields—then through small woods of mountain trees, and finally pine forests with white snow peaks clearly cut out against the sky.

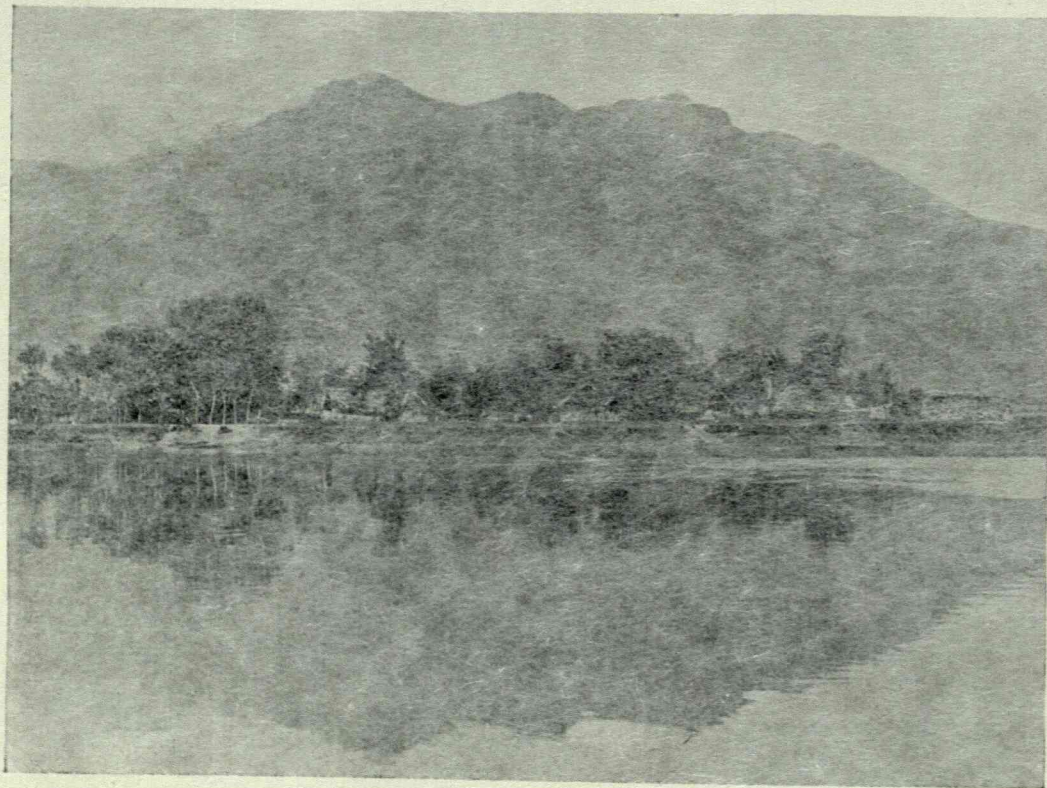
At Baramula, there is a most excellent bungalow, with the prince of *khansamahs* in charge. Stores in the shape of wine, spirits, sodawater, and tinned articles of most kinds can be got here; also Kashmir wine, which is good and cheap, and Kashmir jams, which are good but not cheap. From Baramula to Srinagar it is 32 miles by road; but probably three days' driving will be found enough by most people, and they will be glad to take to the water in a house-boat or *doonga*, which is a flat-bottomed boat, covered over with thick matting; all very well in fine weather, but not very pleasant in rain or wind.

The boatman and his family occupy the after portion. The smell of their meals is often unsavoury, and a crying infant as a

rule forms a portion of the family. The boat's crew consist generally of three men and two women, all of whom take their share of the labour—sometimes towing from the bank with ropes, sometimes punting, and, when the water is deep, using heart-shaped paddles.

Before starting on his trip, the intending visitor to Kashmir should make up his mind how he wishes to spend his time there. If he wants "perfect rest," with almost perfect comfort added, then he should secure a house-boat; these are, of course, not such as one finds on the Thames, but they are very comfortable all the same. The best way to secure a suitable one is to write beforehand to Captain Losack's Agency at Srinagar, give the number of your party, and ask them to send a house-boat to meet you at Baramula on a certain day, asking them to see that it is fully furnished, including glass, crockery, cooking utensils, and beds. It is advisable to mention all these articles, as many visitors bring some camp kit with them; ask them also to send a cook and a sweeper. These are the only servants required, as the boatmen do a considerable portion of the work. With the house-boat, a kitchen-boat is also required for cooking and for the servants to live in. The house-boat rent varies from Rs. 50 to 70 per month, *plus* certain extra charges for cooking utensils, &c.; the kitchen-boat is Rs. 15 per month, including the crew. Three or four permanent boatmen must be kept for the house-boat; four or six extra men will be required when moving, but men are hired at 4 annas a march, and can be got almost anywhere.

These arrangements having been made beforehand, the visitor, on arrival at Baramula, is independent of everybody and everything,



Village on the Jhelum.

*A Trip to Kashmir.*

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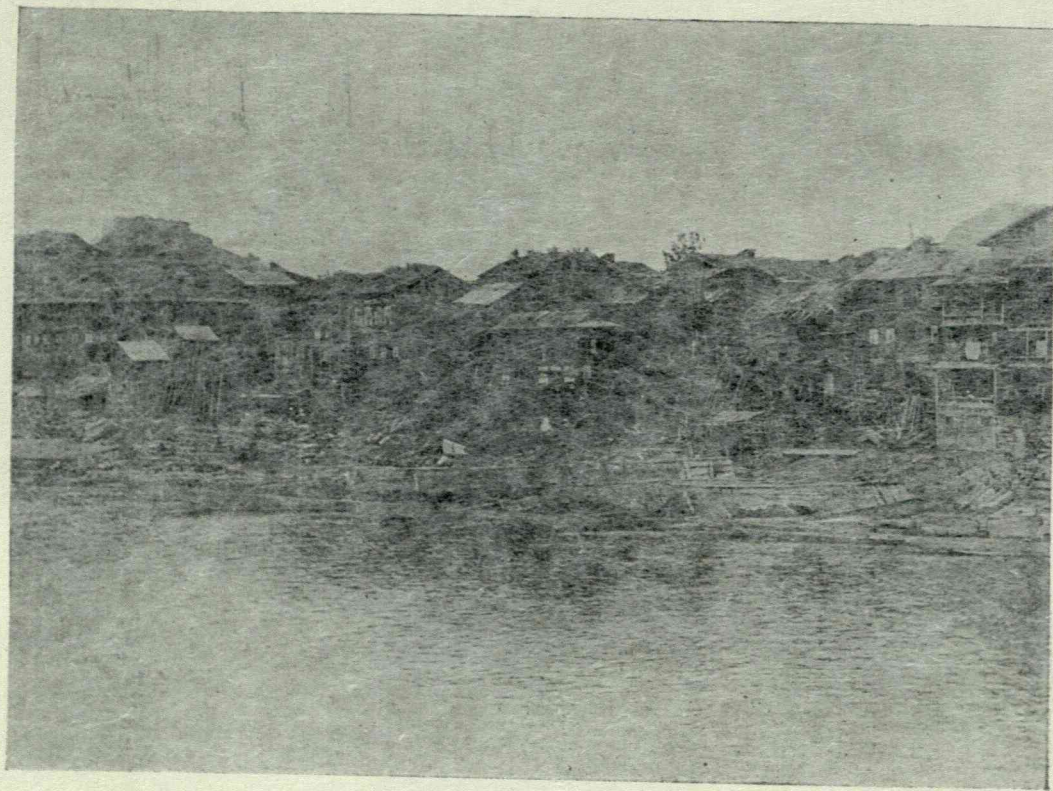
except weather, for there are considerable storms in the lake, and the cautious boatman makes great haste to "tie up" and make all secure, whenever the sky begins to be overcast. September, October and November are, as a rule, fine months in Kashmir, and October is, perhaps, the most charming month of the whole year to spend there.

Leaving Baramula, one goes up the river Jhelum, and progress is slow; a short day, however, brings you as far as Sopur, which is situated where the river leaves the lake; it is not safe to start across the lake in the evening on account of storms. Having left Sopur, you find yourself on the lovely lake of Kashmir, the fame of the beauty of which is known to everyone. In the first place, it is best to make for Srinagar direct. Arrangements for one's comfort, in the shape of stores, should first be made there, and almost every possible want can be satisfied by a visit to the shop of Johir Lall. There are now several shops of this kind, but his is the old original, and his goods can be relied upon.

The Managers of Captain Losack's Agency will secure, on hire, any possible thing that can be required, from a boat, or tent, to a tin-kettle, and tell you exactly what should be paid for them. The various native merchants do most of their trade in boats, and invariably make a combined attack on any new arrival; on the slightest encouragement they will simply take charge of your boat and have all their merchandise exposed in a wonderfully short time. They are easily got rid of, however, with a promise to visit their shop, and if you write your name in their book; this they regard as an advertisement, and they are quite content

whether you go or not; they and their wares are all much the same, and it is advisable to acquire some idea of how much a man lies when he says "I tell you proper price" before any important purchases are made. There is only one man who is an exception, and that is "Hubeeb Jew," the silversmith; he may be regarded as *facile princeps* amongst all the merchants; his work is beautiful, and his prices are all fixed by weight; the only thing against him is that he has such a large business that he seldom has many things ready.

Srinagar is now quite a fashionable hill station. What a change it is since the old days! Then, after a week or so, one used to know everybody; now nearly every suitable place has got tents pitched on it: boats simply line the banks, and at night there is almost one continuous line of lights; daintily gotten-up house-boats with gay curtains, besides the more old-fashioned *doongas*, though even these are now in some cases adorned with curtains, cushioned chairs, photographs and nicknacks. Boatmen are dressed up in a sort of livery, as *dandy-wallas* would be at Simla or Darjeeling. So "the old order changeth, giving place to the new," and one cannot help a feeling of relief when one gets away to the jungle, where nature rules supreme, unfettered by the march of civilization, uncontrolled by society's customs, and unchanged by man's desecrating hand. There, at least, we find the country in all its old loveliness; man has not yet begun to interfere with the wonders and glories of the most lovely country under the sun, which the Persians in old time so justly named the "unequalled."



Part of Srinagar.

*A Trip to Kashmir.*

11

Expenses of a Three-month Trip for Two People from Calcutta and back.

TRAVELLING EXPENSES.

	Rs.	A.	P.
2 Railway tickets to Rawal Pindi, 1st return	..	294	8 0
1 Railway ticket to Rawal Pindi, 3rd return	...	34	10 0
Refreshments <i>en route</i> for two people	...	25	0 0
Special tonga to Murree	...	15	0 0
<i>Ehka</i> for servant and baggage	...	5	0 0
Hotel at Murree, one day	...	15	0 0
Special tonga to Baramula	...	90	0 0
<i>Ehka</i> to Baramula	...	15	0 0
Dak Bungalows for 3 days	...	30	0 0
Petty expenses	...	5	7 0
Charges for return journey	...	200	7 0

Total expenses to Baramula and back .. 730 0 0

SERVANTS AND BOATS FOR 2½ MONTHS.

House-boat	...	150	0 0
<i>Doonga</i> for kitchen, and servants	...	37	8 0
Small Shikari boat	...	2	8 0
Wages of 3 boatmen for house-boat	..	45	0 0
1 anna per day extra when away from Srinagar	...	14	0 0
Hire of cooking utensils and any extra furniture not included in house-boat	...	15	0 0
Cook's wages	..	40	0 0
Sweeper's wages	...	20	0 0
Cooly for kitchen, etc.	...	15	0 0
Extra men when moving boat say 4, at 4 annas each per march	...	50	0 0
Extra pay for servant taken from Calcutta, at 4 annas per day	...	23	0 0
Warm clothes and blanket for him	...	12	0 0

Total cost of boats, servants, etc. ... 424 0 0

HOUSE-KEEPING EXPENSES.

Bazar—75 days, at Rs. 2 per day	...	150	0 0
Stores, including whisky, Muree beer, Kashmir wine and soda-water	...	250	0 0
Firewood and oil	...	26	0 0

Total house-keeping expenses ... 426 0 0

TOTAL COST OF 3 MONTHS' TRIP FOR TWO PEOPLE Rs. 1,580 0 0

CHAPTER II.

SOCIAL AND JUNGLE LIFE.

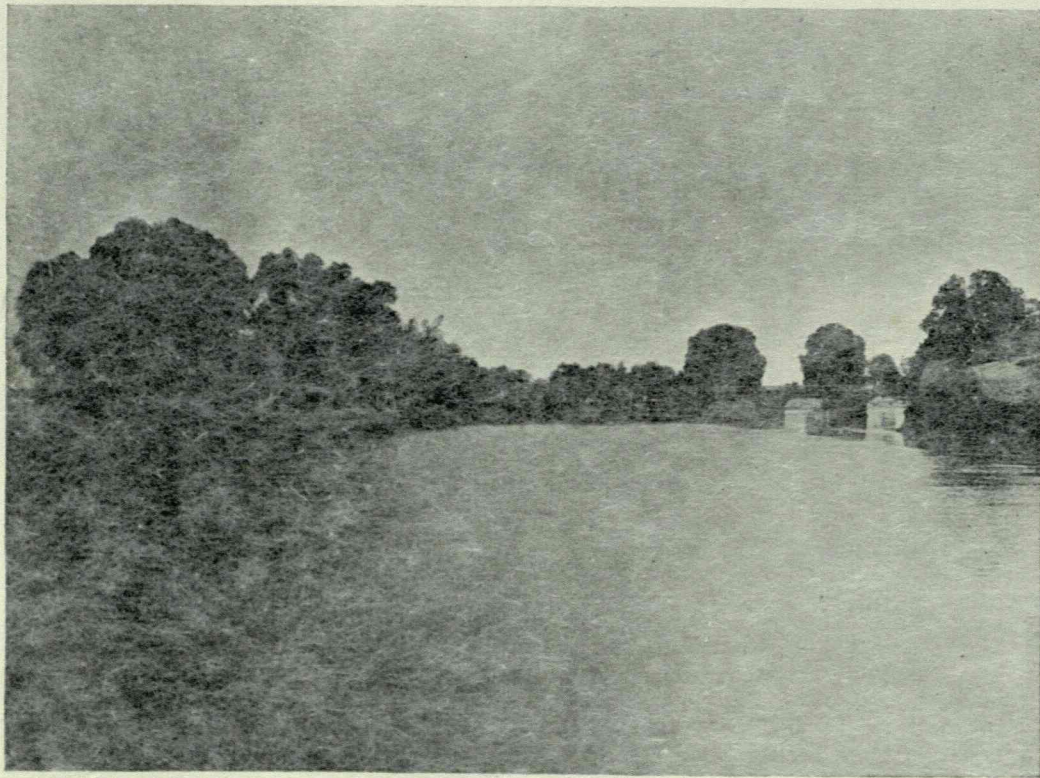


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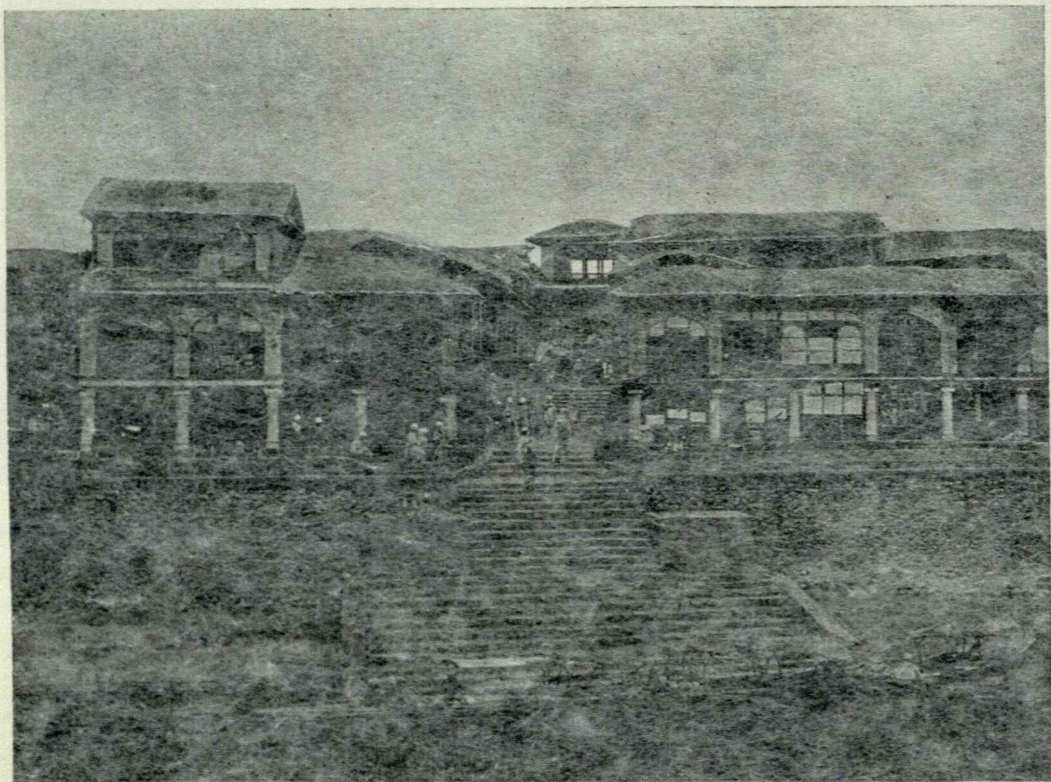
AVING arrived in Kashmir, the first thing to do is to decide how the available time is to be spent.

There are four courses open—"Social life," "Jungle life," "Shooting as a pastime," and "Shooting in earnest." Let us combine the first two and presume that the visitor has determined to divide his time between them, and to enjoy the beauties of the country and climate, combined with a certain amount of the enjoyment which is to be derived from the society of his fellow-men and women. Whatever may be the object of the visit to Kashmir it is advisable to go in the first instance to Srinagar.

One of the great charms of Kashmir is the absolute freedom of the life there. If one is tired of Srinagar, or any other place where you happen to be, it is only necessary to engage a few extra coolies or boatmen in order to shift your residence. These are always available ; if in Srinagar, a note to the ever-courteous Babu Amar Nath Rai Sahib will at once procure what is wanted.



Bridge at Sambal on the Jhelum.



Srinagar—Scene of the Fire on the 28th October 1898.



This gentleman has been in charge of the comforts of the visitors for over twenty-five years ; and, though he now requires several assistants to arrange for the rapidly increasing numbers, no request or complaint addressed to him is ever neglected. If one is away from Srinagar a note to the "Tesildar" of the nearest village will produce the labour required.

Srinagar ("The City of the Sun"), or as it has been called in more modern times, the "Venice of the East," is the capital of Kashmir, and contains a population of over 100,000. It lines both banks of the river Jhelum for a distance of three or four miles, the river being crossed by seven bridges. All the principal houses and buildings are on the river bank. The town stretches in some places as far as two miles from the river, but the houses there are squalid and filthy, and this part is seldom visited by Europeans. Srinagar was visited on the 28th October 1898 by one of the terrible conflagrations which seem to take place periodically there. It was only in 1892 that 1,500 houses were burnt to the ground. In 1898 an area of not less than one and a half square miles was destroyed, the damage being estimated at about three lacs of rupees. Srinagar is a city of no recent origin, it having been founded in the 6th century. It is over 5,000ft. above the level of the sea, and is a pleasant residence all the year round, except during the months of July and August when, being surrounded by extensive swamps which dry up at that period of the year, it becomes hot and muggy. During these months most visitors make expeditions into the hills or go to Gulmarg, which is considered the hill station of Kashmir.



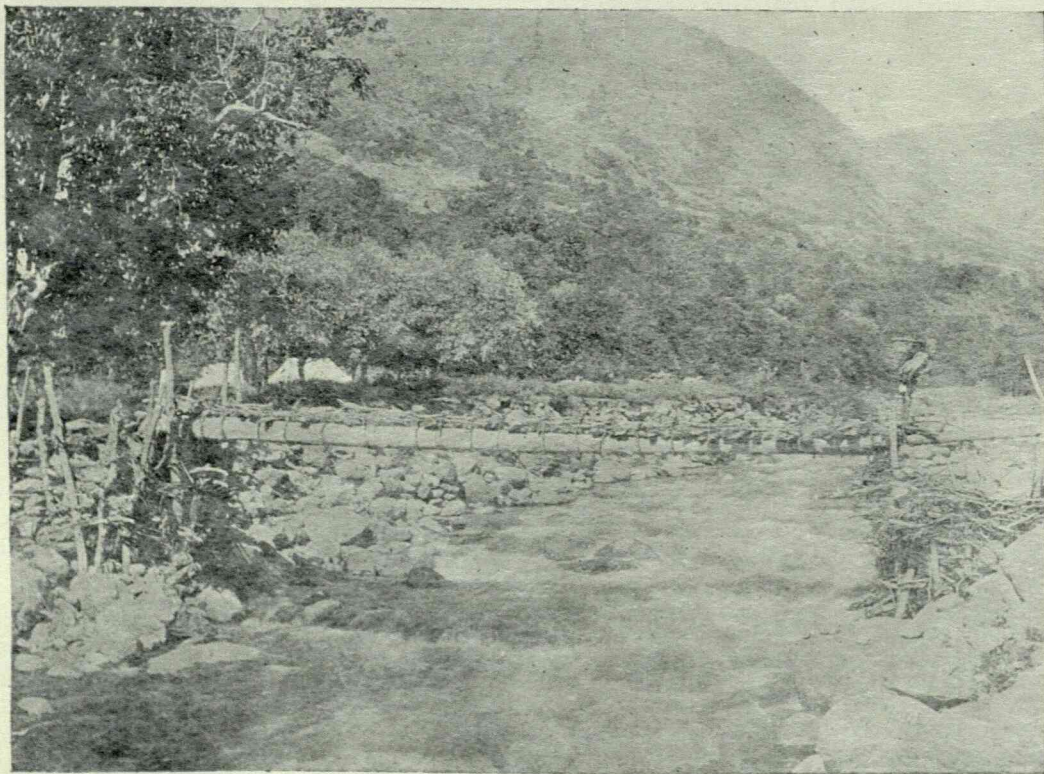
Above the city, on a hill about 500ft. high, is the picturesque Fort of Hari Parbat, built by the Emperor Akbar ; close to, rises another hill over 1,000ft. high, which is called the Tukht-i-Suleiman or Solomon's Throne. On the top of this hill are the ruins of what is supposed to have been a Buddhist temple, which is said to date back as far as 200 B.C. This is one of the many curious ruins to be seen in Kashmir, the origin of all of which is more or less shrouded in mystery.

If one intends to remain any time in Srinagar, the first thing to be done on arrival is to select a suitable camping-ground. Several places are reserved for this purpose, some being set aside for married people, others for bachelors. If occupying a house-boat, a suitable place to moor it is easily found.

Amongst the industries of Kashmir those of most interest to travellers are shawl-making, gold, silver, and copper work, and papier-maché ; wood-carving has also recently been added to these, and some very fine specimens of this work can now be bought. The wood used is mostly walnut ; unfortunately the demand is so great that unseasoned wood is frequently employed. The leather work is also good, and all necessary articles for a shooting trip, such as gun covers, cartridge bags, hold-alls, etc., etc., can be bought very cheap. It seems foreign to the nature of any Kashmiri to sell any of his wares without a considerable amount of bargaining ; if any confiding traveller pays him the price he asks for any particular article, he pockets the money with a disappointed look, and one can fancy that what is running in his mind is—"I might have asked another rupee."



First Camp up Eria Nullah.



Bridge at Erin Nullah.

1461

A Trip to Kashmir.

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Besides the industries before mentioned as being of interest to travellers, there are now several carpet manufactories, which are doing fairly well ; winemaking has also been tried with a certain amount of success ; but, as yet the wine has not been found suitable for export. Excellent jams are also made from fruits grown in the neighbourhood of Srinagar. Great hopes are entertained of the prospects of the silk industry. The silk-worms flourish on the mulberry trees which grow in all parts of Kashmir ; the best machinery has been obtained, and the Kashmiris have taken very kindly to the work. It is intended to send the silk to European markets, and the promoters of this enterprise are very confident as to results. Visitors who make Srinagar their permanent head-quarters during the summer have plenty of society and amusement. There is polo, cricket, lawn tennis, and even the ubiquitous bicycle is by no means uncommon. There is a small club with a reading-room, which is largely patronized in the afternoon. The Resident, Sir Adelbert Talbot, and his charming daughters entertain frequently at the Residency. In addition to all this there are numerous excursions, the most enjoyable of which is a visit to the Dal Lake. This is about five miles long and over two miles broad, and on it are situated in Nasim Bagh and the Shalimar Bagh. These were used by potentates in former days for entertainments during the summer months. The Shalimar Bagh, or, being translated, the "Garden of the abode of the Goddess of Love," is the most attractive of these. Tradition has it that it was here that the famous Emperor Jehangir made up the only quarrel he ever had with his beautiful Nur Mahal

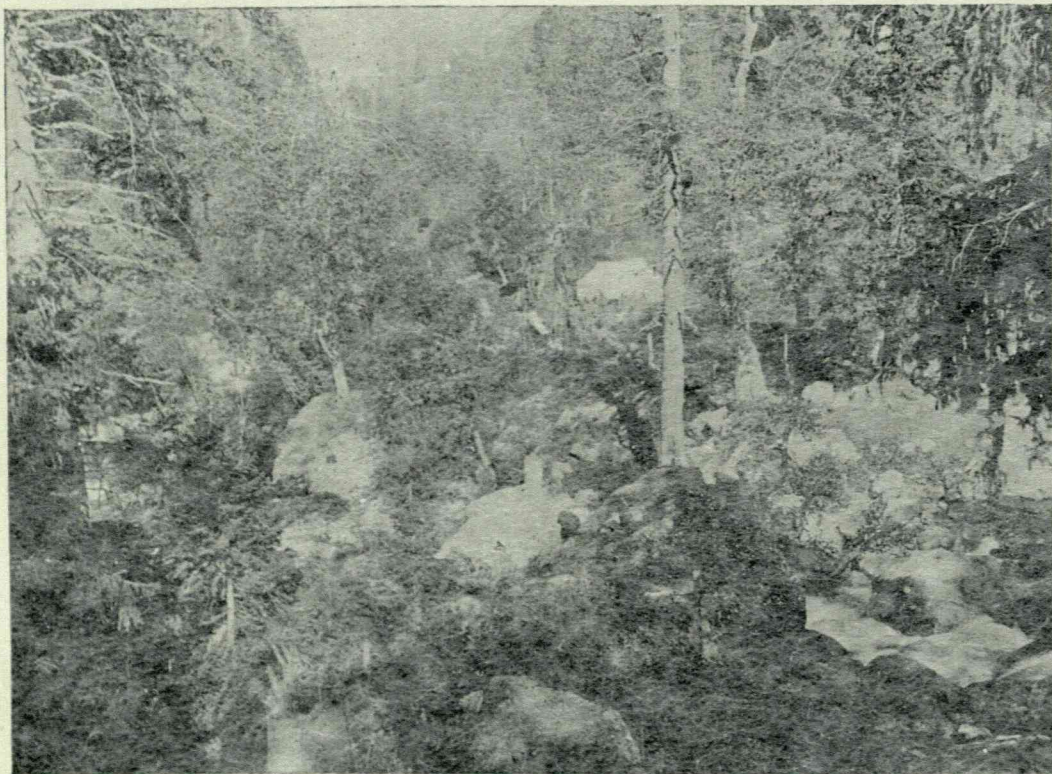
the "light of his harem." Moore has taken advantage of this romantic episode in his *Lalla Rookh*, and describes it as follows :—

And well do vanish'd frowns enhance
The charms of every brighten'd glance ;
And dearer seems each dawning smile
For having lost its light awhile :
And happier now for all her sighs,
As on his arm her head reposes,
She whispers him, with laughing eyes,
" Remember, love, the Feast of Roses ! "

A more practical but equally interesting sight to be seen on the Dal Lake are the floating gardens, from which an excellent supply of vegetables is obtained. These are formed by tangled masses of rushes, accumulated on the spot selected for the garden, and fixed there by long poles driven through them and into the mud below. On the top of this is a layer of water moss ; on this, small potshaped receptacles made of mud are built up, and, in earth inside these, vegetables such as cucumbers, tomatoes, melons, etc., are grown.

For those who are anxious for a little quiet sport, mahseer fishing is to be had almost anywhere on the river Jhelum, except between two of the bridges, where the fish are looked upon as sacred on account of a tradition that the soul of a departed Maharajah entered into one of them.

If time is limited and the visitor wishes to enjoy some of the "Jungle life" he will probably not stay longer than is absolutely necessary in Srinagar to make arrangements for stores, etc. This life, for people who are able to undergo a certain amount of hard work and "roughing it," is infinitely preferable, and gives them



Camp near Haramook.

A Trip to Kashmir.

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an opportunity of travelling through a country, the beauty of which it would be hard to beat.

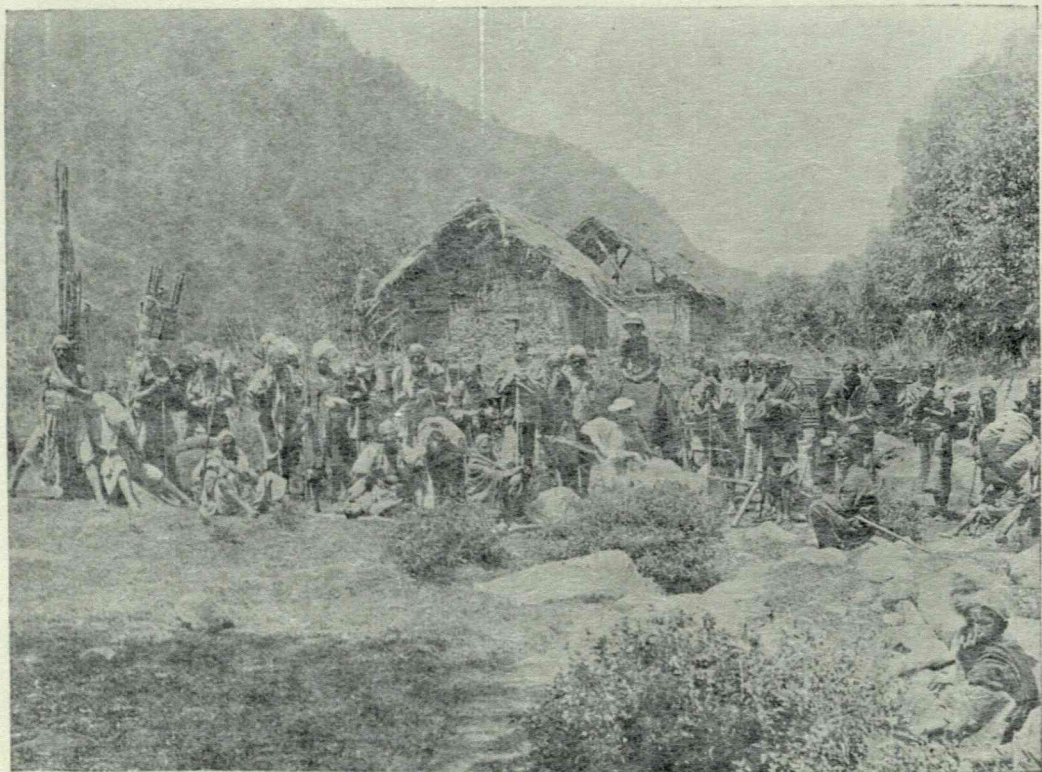
A valley of the richest possible verdure where vines, apricots, mulberries, walnuts, peaches, almonds, apples and pears grow in luxurious abundance; where there exist beautiful lakes fed by rushing torrents, wild rocky mountains, noble pine forests, deodars, birch and mountain ash—all these surrounded by ranges of perpetual snow peaks, from Nanga Parbat, which is nearly 27,000 feet above the sea, downwards. Surely such a varied selection as this could not fail to please the most fastidious. Srinagar may change and become simply a fashionable summer resort, and it probably will, as a metre-gauge railway is to be constructed from Jammu over the Banihal Pass. This railway is expected to be completed in two years time, but this seems doubtful. The route chosen is, to a certain extent, an easy one and no great engineering difficulties are to be overcome till the actual pass is arrived at. This is nearly 10,000 feet above the sea-level and covered by snow during the greater part of the year, and, unless it is to be tunnelled or in some way protected from snow and avalanches, it is hard to imagine how the line can possibly be kept open.

However, even though Srinagar is changed, the country must remain the same: so let him who is surfeited with society's pleasures, penetrate to the wild, almost unknown districts of Kashmir and give his mind a rest.

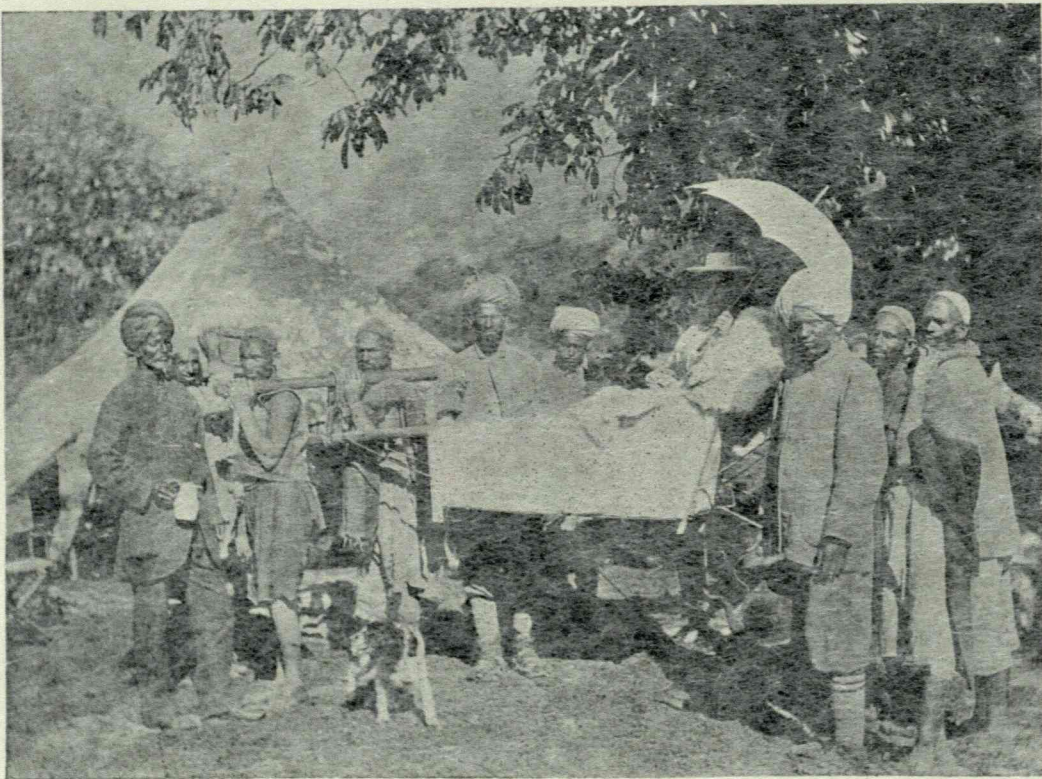
“And with watchful eyes
Feed it mid nature's old felicities.
Rocks, rivers, and smooth lakes more clear than glass
Untouched, unbreathed upon.”



From Srinagar a trip up the river as far as Islamabad is pleasant, seeing on the way the ruins at Martund. This should take about a week ; returning to Srinagar, where it is advisable to complete all that there is to be done there, in the way of purchases, etc., as, if the visit to Kashmir is a short one, it is not worth while, with a heavy house-boat, to spend the time, towing up from the lake to Srinagar a second time. It is advisable to hire a couple of tents in order to be able to explore the beauties of the valleys, as well as the lake. Manasbul will be found a lovely place to stop at, and also, as a start for a little trip inland. It is at the entrance to the Sind Valley. A very pleasant march is to go up this valley about two marches, and then cross over by an easy pass into the Erin Nullah. This Nullah runs right up to the foot of that grand lump of a mountain "Haramook," which towers above everything and is well worth an early rise in the morning to see in all its naked beauty. During the day it is too often shrouded in its frill-like covering of clouds. The march up Erin Nullah is an easy one, and can be done on ponies or even by dandy. If a dandy is wanted, it can be hired for a trifle in Srinagar ; safe coolies to carry it can be got in any village. Returning by Erin Nullah, you come back to the lake again at Bundipur ; so, if this little trip is taken, the boats should be sent round there from Manasbul. Above Bundipur is a lovely camping-ground in the pine forests called Tragbal, which is the first march on the road to Gilgit, there is an excellent road, the work of Mr. Mitchell of Messrs. Spedding & Co., and as it is under his care, it is needless to say it is always



Moving Camp.



Going out for Afternoon Tea.

*A Trip to Kashmir.*

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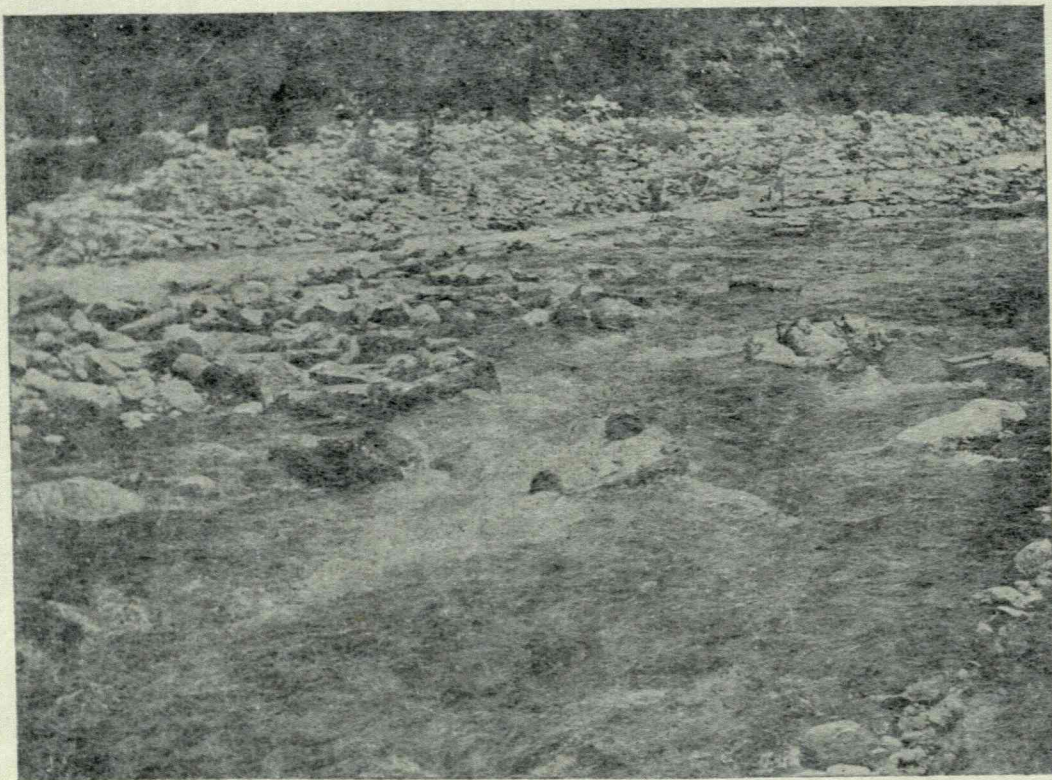
in perfect order. If time permits, this trip may be continued as far as Gurais, three marches, which gives the visitor a chance of seeing some of the wilder scenery of Kashmir, without doing any actual hard work.

There are hundreds of other trips to be made, short and long, hard and easy ; all depends upon the powers of the visitor and the time at his disposal. If he wishes to travel in comfort, however, he should never undertake too much in one day, or rely upon the information given by the natives regarding distance, for they seem quite incapable of estimating it. "Ek perow" (one march) may mean six miles, and it may mean 12! "Ek kos" which should mean about two miles may be absolutely anything and is much the same as "a mile and a bittock" in Scotland. The most useful book to have with one is "A Guide to Kashmir" by John Collet published by Messrs. Newman and Company of Calcutta. It is revised up to date and gives the distance along the most travelled routes, but even this is sometimes misleading, as a march of six miles may look very simple on paper, but the nature of the ground sometimes makes it a fair day's work. It is always advisable in marching to leave a responsible servant with the coolies, otherwise it is absolutely impossible to say when they will come in. The best coolies should always be given the kitchen loads, and put under the cook's charge. In marching, if one's health and temper are to be considered, the commissariat should be the first consideration.

The timber trade finds occupation for many of the Kashmiris and a considerable revenue is derived from it. The trees are

allowed to be cut in certain districts only, and the tree-cutters have to go further afield now than they used to do. Tracks are cut on the mountain side, through the lower forests to form "Arboriducts," down which the trees are pushed in pieces three to four feet in length. They are then carried to the nearest river, marked with their owner's mark, and thrown into the stream, down which they find their own way. Gangs of men follow them up, helping them on their way with long poles. They sometimes collect in shallow places forming natural dams, till the water accumulated above them is sufficient to carry them away. The process of urging these logs on their downward course seems to lead to a considerable amount of strife, and the poles are, sad to relate, frequently used for purposes other than dislodging wood!

Probably the first thing which will strike any one who has visited Kashmir, say twenty years ago, and again within the last few years, is the wonderful improvement in the position of the agriculturalists of the valley, and the marvellous increase of the cultivated land. Mr. Knight in his well-known book, "Where Three Empires Meet," describes the Kashmiri as "among the most despicable creatures on earth, incorrigible cheats, and liars and cowardly to an inconceivable degree": this could hardly be said to be true of them now; they have been taught the benefits of civilization, and though some of its evils may have been also introduced, they have at any rate found that under good and just administration they gain the fruits of their labour in the fields.



Floating Logs down the River.

CHAPTER III.

PREPARATIONS.

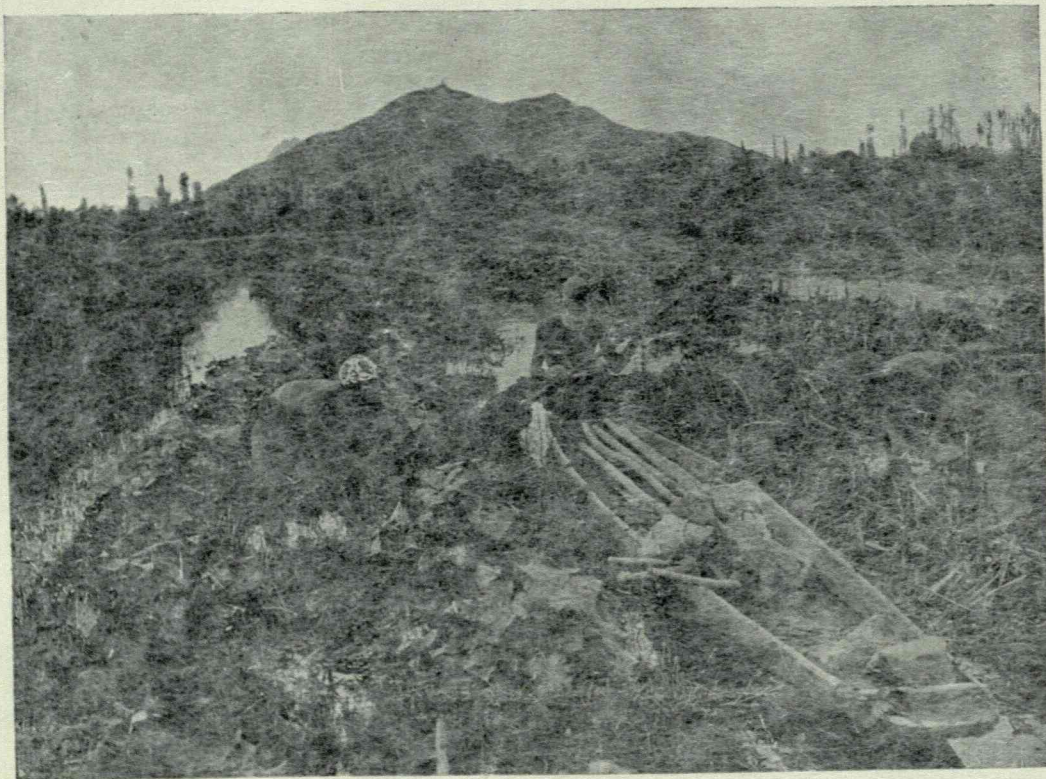


KASHMIRIS are slow thinkers; they have been subjected to so many years of misrule and martyrdom, that it has taken them several years to realize that good fortune has at last come to them, and that the strange epithet which they had earned, “worshippers of tyranny,” no longer applies. In olden time the cultivator was about the only man who made nothing out of the work he did; now the old Kashmiri proverb—“Yus Rarik gonglu sui Rarik Rea”—is a truth in the valley, and the marvellous extent of cultivation, with its accompanying extension of land revenue is evidence that “he who ploughs shall reap.” This improvement is entirely due to the work of Mr. Lawrence, now the Private Secretary to His Excellency the Viceroy, and the name of Lawrence is known and revered in Kashmir now as that of his namesake was, and even still is, by inhabitants of many parts of India.

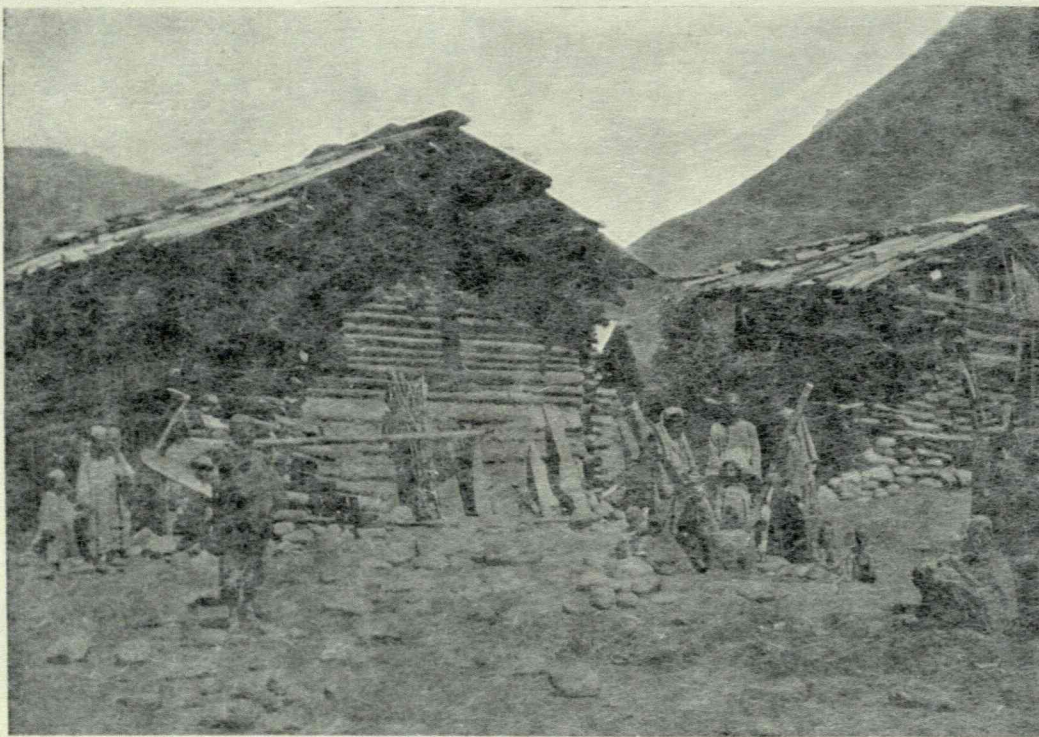
The cultivators in Kashmir are known as Assamis. So long as they pay their revenue they cannot be ejected, and their holdings descend to their children. They are not allowed to

alienate their land by sale or by mortgage ; this, as all who understand Eastern ways will admit, is a very important point, as it puts a stop to the extortion of the money-lender. A native who requires readymoney is always willing to forego any future prospects to obtain what he wants for immediate use, and the rule which practically amounts to the same as "without power of anticipation" in an English money settlement is a very wise and necessary one. This form of tenure, which is practically the tenure which had always existed in Kashmir, was legalized by Mr. Lawrence, who effected the settlement of Kashmir between the years 1889 to 1895.

To gain some idea of the work done by Mr. Lawrence in Kashmir, one cannot do better than quote from his lecture, delivered at a meeting of the East India Association in 1895, when our present Viceroy, then Mr. G. N. Curzon, Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, was in the chair, and in introducing the lecturer, said that Mr. Lawrence had been brought into closer contact, not merely with the rulers and the upper classes, but with the zemindars, the peasants, and all classes of the population of Kashmir, than any Englishman had been. Mr. Lawrence, in the course of his lecture, said that the cultivators had the reputation of being dishonest and lazy ; he believed that such used to be the case ; but it is not so now. All they ask is to be left alone in their lovely valleys, and their simple prayer was one which fortunately finds no place in the English litany, "*Hakim tak Hakim*,"—from the ruler and the doctor good Lord deliver us.



A Floating Garden.



Village Scene: Off to Plough.

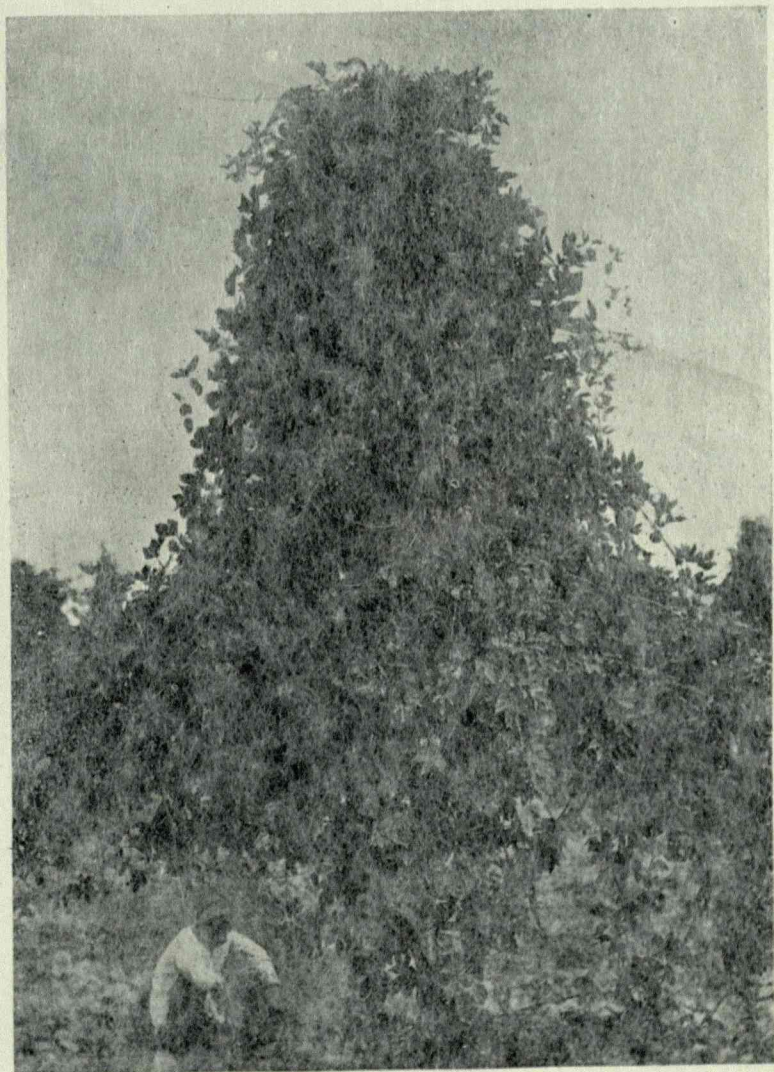
A Trip to Kashmir.

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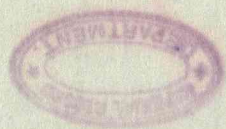
In describing the country Mr. Lawrence said: "There are mountains for the mountaineers, flowers for the botanist, a vast field for the geologist and magnificent ruins for the archaeologist, and above all the kindest of welcomes from the ruler of the country and his officials. Confidence and capital would make Kashmir the wonder and the envy of the world." At this meeting the Chairman said that "from his own personal experience he was able to say that the results of Mr. Lawrence's work had been threefold: in the first place, it had added largely to the area under cultivation; secondly, it had added to the revenue of the State; and thirdly, and most important of all, it had increased very largely the prosperity and contentment of the people."

The people of Kashmir have been compared with the Irish as regards hospitality, and this is a feature which all travellers in out-of-the-way districts cannot fail to observe. On arrival in a village the traveller is almost invariably greeted with an offering of some sort; generally it takes the form of a few *cabanis* (dried apricots) honey or some other eatable which the donor thinks will be acceptable. They have also a considerable sense of humour, of which Mr. Lawrence gave an instance. At one of his law courts an old man was perceived among the crowd of suitors persistently standing on his head. Mr. Lawrence, fearful of unpleasant results from this strange behaviour, kindly got some one to turn the old chap right side up and then questioned him as to his inversion. "Oh Sahib," he replied, "since your honour's judgment about my land, my affairs have become so mixed up

that I don't know whether I am on my head or my heels." Another story, which shows a somewhat Irish humour, is told of a *shikari* who was asked how the large blocks of stone in the ruins at Martund were ever got into position; he replied that the inhabitants were nine feet high in those days. He was told that even nine feet men could not possibly raise those huge blocks; his answer to this was: "Sahib, the men were eighteen feet high, but I said nine, because I did not think you would believe me if I said eighteen." Possibly it may be thought that already too much advantage of Mr. Lawrence's ideas has been taken, but there is no one who is more thoroughly competent to express opinions regarding Kashmir and its inhabitants, and probably few who possess the power of conveying their ideas to their readers so graphically. One quotation from his book may be permitted which realistically describes the scenery; he says: "There are grand forests of pines and firs; down through these forests dash mountain streams white with foam, passing in their course through pools of the purest cobalt; when the great dark forests cease, and the brighter woodland begins, the banks of the streams are ablaze with clematis, honeysuckle, jessamine, and wild roses which remind one of azaleas. The green smooth turf of the woodland glades is like a well kept lawn dotted with clumps of hawthorn and other beautiful trees and bushes. It would be difficult to describe the colours which are seen on the Kashmir mountains. In early morning they are often a delicate semi-transparent violet relieved against a saffron sky, and with light vapours clinging round their crests. Then the rising sun deepens



A Hop Vine.





Children Weeding Polo Ground.



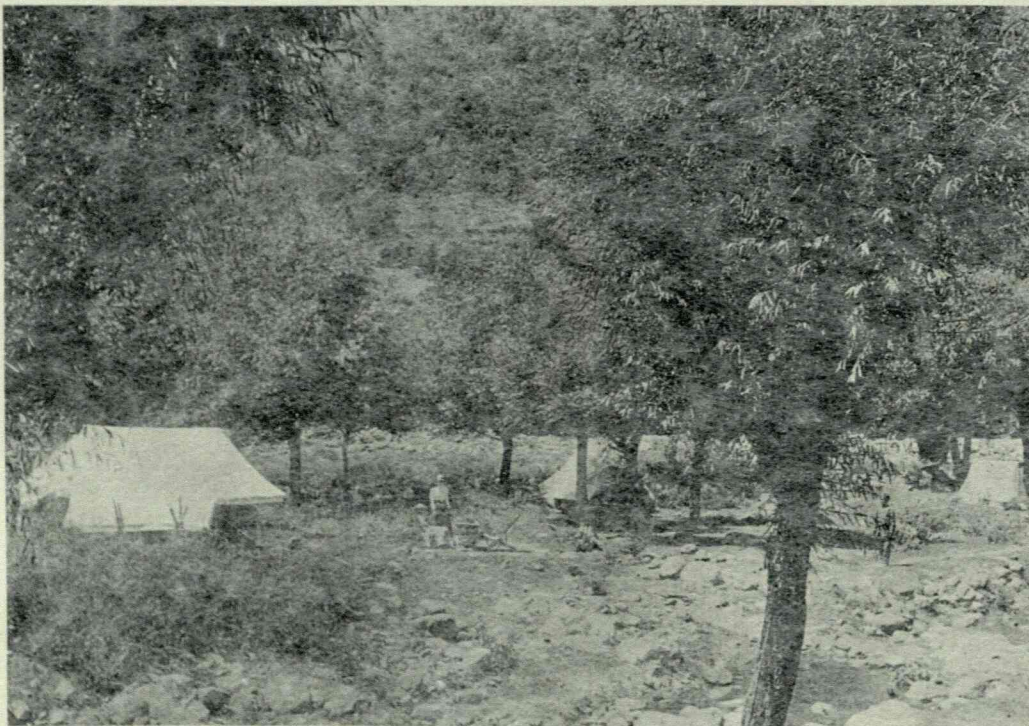
shadows and produces sharp outlines and strong passages of purple and indigo in deep ravines. Later on it is nearly all blue and lavender, with white snow peaks and ridges under a vertical sun, and as the afternoon wears on these become richer, violet and pale-bronze gradually changing to rose and pink, with yellow or orange snow, till the last rays of the sun have gone, leaving the mountains dyed a ruddy crimson, with the snows showing a pale, creamy-green by contrast." Those who meditate a visit to the "Happy Valley" would do well to read "The Valley of Kashmir," by Mr. Walter R. Lawrence, c.i.e., and the perusal of this interesting work will add considerably to the enjoyment of the trip; while those who have the misfortune to be unable to visit the country themselves will realize the beauties and interests so graphically therein described.

Sport in Kashmir is, alas! not what it used to be; the game is not nearly as plentiful as it was a few years ago. This regrettable state of things has been brought about chiefly by the natives, who kill large numbers of animals in the winter to provide themselves with food; and also, sad to relate, with a view to selling the heads to so-called sportsmen, who visit the country in the summer, but are too lazy to do the shooting themselves.

The game laws recently established will, it is hoped, put an end to most of this; they also restrict the numbers of each description of game to be shot by any one person. It is a pity these game laws had not been brought into force many years ago, but if properly enforced now, they may yet be in time to save one of the most beautiful shooting grounds in the world; all



sportsmen who go to Kashmir should do their best to act in concert with the "Durbar," and report any breach in the game laws which may come under their notice. There is only one alternative and, should these laws prove a failure, it is quite possible that one may have to rent a *nullah* in Kashmir as one has to do a moor in Scotland.



Camp, Wala Lake.

CHAPTER IV.

SHOOTING IN EARNEST—NOTES FROM MY DIARY.



E will now suppose that the visitor has decided to devote his holiday to "Shooting in earnest" which means ibex and red bear, or better. It is unnecessary to discuss his battery, every one has his own views as regards the weapon he prefers to use, but, whatever his choice

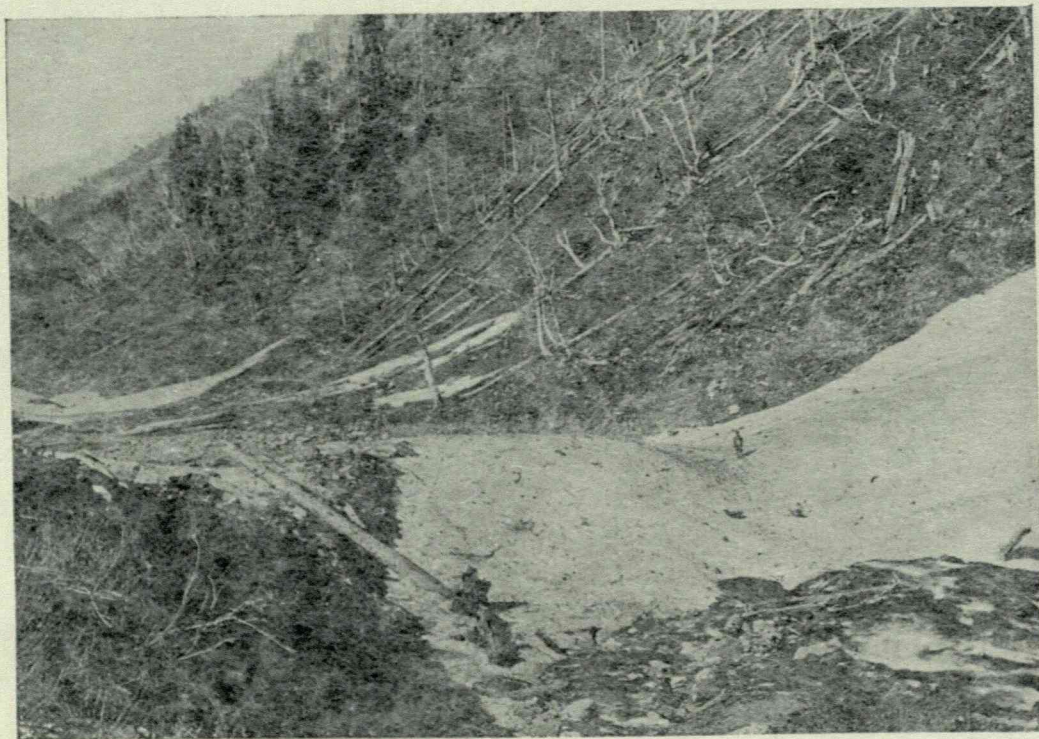
may be, let him see that he has the best of its kind, for he is undertaking a trip which will cost him a certain amount of money, and a very great amount of fatigue and hard work, and, if his satanic majesty wishes to provide a special torment for sportsmen, he has only to arrange for a shot to be missed after a long and tedious stalk. Few feelings of misery will compare with those one experiences on seeing a fine head disappear untouched, when one has spent possibly the whole day in endeavouring to secure it. Every one undertaking a long expedition should be provided with two rifles; a fall in climbing, or other accident, may put one gun out of action, and render the fatigues of a long march useless. Besides this, a second rifle may be very



acceptable when it comes to a case of a charging bear. As regards the remainder of his impedimenta, nothing which is not actually required should be taken; ten coolie loads, of lbs. 60 each, should be the very utmost that is taken, for often, in remote districts, it is hard to get coolies.

Next to his guns the most important part of a sportsman's arrangements is his *shikari*, and, where it is at all possible, it is advisable to secure the services of a man recommended by some trustworthy brother sportsman. "Chits" are not to be trusted, and are frequently found in the possession of men to whom they have never been given. Unless any particular district is known, it is better to leave the selection of the ground to the *shikari*. Most of the good men are just as keen as their masters, possibly a shade keener—when the ground is as bad as ibex ground can be. A *chota shikari*, a gun coolie, and a tiffin coolie, should also be carefully selected—for, if these are good men, their services are very valuable, both for tracking and for obtaining *khubber*—a good telescope and one or, even better, two pairs of first-class binoculars are indispensable; the former will often save one the disgust of finding, after a long stalk, that the herd does not contain an animal worth shooting.

Perhaps the best way of endeavouring to give some idea of an ibex shooting trip, will be to give it in the form of extracts from my diary; with ibex, one combines red bear shooting as they are found practically on the same ground—markhor may also be included; it all depends on the district. Markhor are, as a rule, found on even worse ground than ibex; more dangerous climbing



Snow Bridge.

has therefore to be done in stalking them, but otherwise the shooting is much the same.

We were a party of three, and the district selected was in the neighbourhood of Skardu; a long march therefore had to be negotiated, and our starting point was Manusbul; we arrived there by boat on the 10th of April 1894. We spent the day sorting our baggage and arranging it in suitable loads for the coolies; it is most important that this should be carefully done before starting on a long march; once the loads are satisfactorily arranged, there will be no trouble about them during the rest of the march.

11th.—Started at daylight up the Sind Valley, and got as far as Kungen, two marches through lovely scenery; from here coolies have to be engaged to go as far as Dras, and there was considerable difficulty in arranging this, as the road was reported to be very bad and considerably blocked by snow.

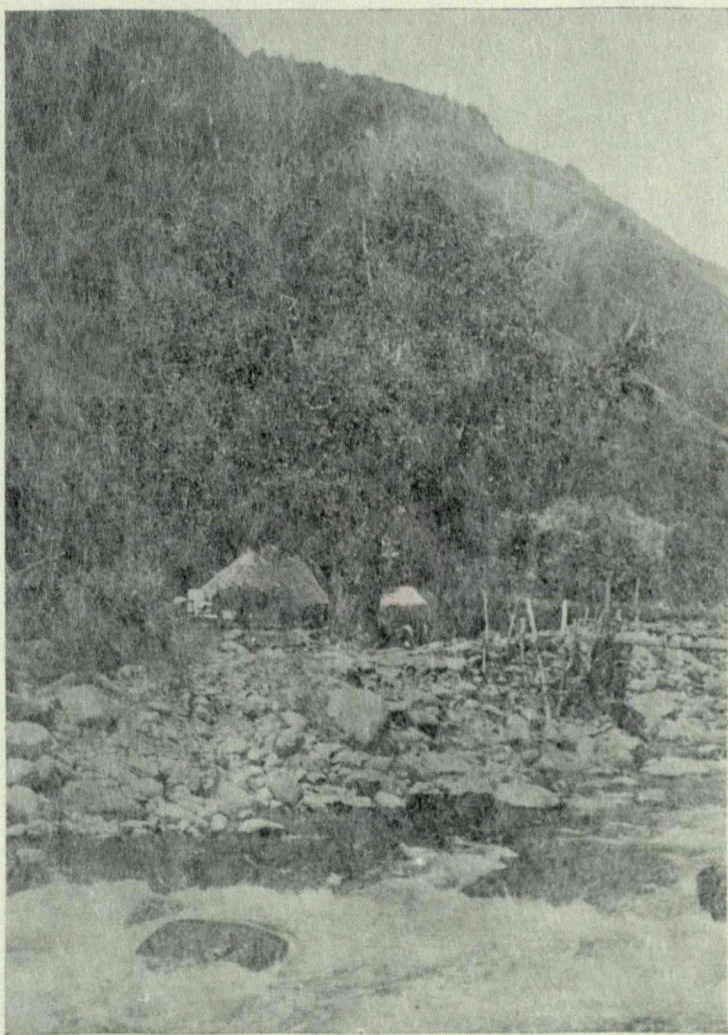
12th.—Started at 6-30, and again did two marches, sleeping in a hut near the foot of the snows.

13th.—Fairly on to the snow and very hard marching it was; such a path as there had been being entirely covered by snow; in many places huge avalanches, which reach down to the river, had to be climbed over. It was snowing hard when we arrived at Sonamerg, and we were very thankful to accept the hospitality of a native, who put his hut at our disposal.

14th.—A short march of eight miles over the snow brought us within two miles of Baltal, where we camped in a wood of big firs; the shelter of which was very necessary to protect one from the fearful biting cold wind which blew off the Zoji Pass; here we

found three other sportsmen, one of whom had been writing for no less than ten days, for a chance to negotiate this formidable barrier. We were camped on the top of over 10 ft. of snow, and it snowed hard again in the evening ; things looked gloomy, but we retired to bed early so as to be prepared to take advantage of any break in the weather. The Zoji Pass at this time of the year is always formidable ; the ascent from the Kashmir side goes up a sort of funnel, down which the wind blows with such force that one can sometimes hardly stand ; it is detested by the natives on this account, and unless they think the weather is likely to be fine, it is impossible to induce them to undertake the march ; our coolies certainly did their best to induce their deity to favour them with fine weather, for they prayed almost incessantly from the time they arrived till we went to bed. We, with our practical minds, thought they would have been better occupied by fortifying their body with a good square meal.

15th.—A record day in the annals of my labours as regards marching. Shakari called me at 1 A.M., and informed me that the snow had ceased, and it was freezing hard. I told him to call me again at 3, when I turned out and found a glorious bright starlight morning ; the cold was intense, and I was thankful that there were no dressing operations necessary. Camping in such a temperature, I found it better always to dispense with the second virtue, and reserve my undressing and washing for more congenial climates. After a cup of chocolate and a couple of eggs, we were off by 4, still dark but a lovely fresh crisp frosty morning when it was a pleasure to swing along over the hard

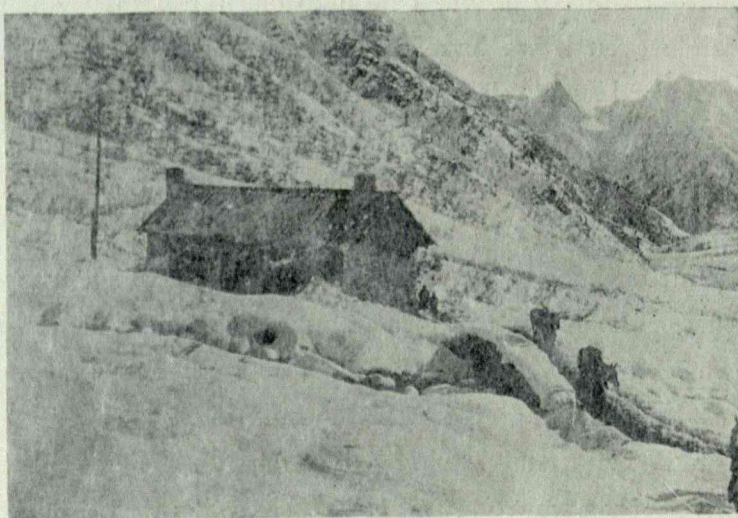


Camp and River.

frozen snow. But our trials were to come, the wind came, with the light and blue sharp frozen particles of snow that literally cut our faces; resting was impossible, one felt one would be frozen to death; everything was frozen, our clothes, our hair, our handkerchiefs, and even the water in our felt regulation bottle. Our noses, deprived of their usual wiper, flowed unrestrainedly over our moustaches till there was a solid block of ice from the tip of one's nose to one's lip. Laughing was impossible even if we had felt inclined for it. At 2 o'clock we thought our labours should be somewhere near ended, but the *shakari* informed us we had still four hours' work before us. We laboured on through snow, which the sun had made so soft, that we had to do as much crawling as walking; the end came at last in the shape of a hut, even the roof of which was below the level of the snow; this formed our resting-place for the night, and we had to share it with about 60 coolies, not to mention numerous other living creatures who inhabited the clothing of the coolies! The latter not having had the march to do seemed much more lively than we were, and took their walks abroad during the night; fatigue was proof even against their attacks, and we slept the sleep of the just.

16th.—Being awoke at daybreak, it was a matter of speculation which of us, if any, would be able to continue on our journey; vigorous shampooing by the *shakaris* managed to bring us all to the port, with the exception of one Goanese boy who was incapable of moving; we therefore tied him securely on to the back of one of our strongest coolies and started.

We could only do a short march, as we had to increase the loads of those of our coolies who were still fit, four having to be left behind on account of snow-blindness. Our spirits increased as we left the Zojila Pass behind us, and we all agreed that we would travel many miles round rather than tackle it again. Fourteen hours on snow is a fair performance for men whose training has consisted in a short stroll of a mile or so per day.



Rest House in the Snow.

A course of brandy was tried with considerable success on one member of the party, who had a weakness always for "Courvoisier," and his spirits, as well as his flask, were lighter by the evening.

We occupied a comfortable hut at Pandras and, to judge by the conversation over our after-dinner pipe, any one would have thought we had spent the greater part of our lives trotting backwards and forwards over the Zojila.



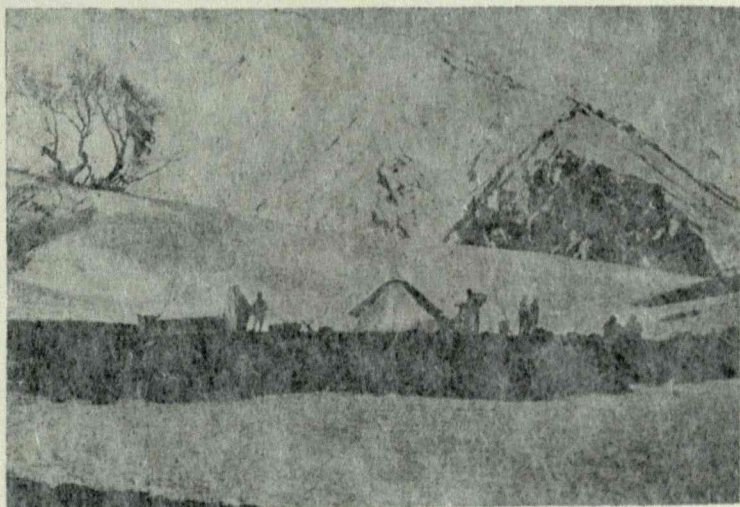
Camp, Gilgit Road.

A Trip to Kashmir.

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17th.—Marched only ten miles and accomplished it with the greatest ease, as we did it in the early morning before the snow had had time to soften, and enjoyed an excellent breakfast, as we were lucky enough to secure no less than thirty eggs, out of which our cook made several courses.

18th.—To-day we did fourteen miles, to which must be added, as far as I was concerned, at least two, which I spent in



Camp in the Snow.

pursuit of a wood-cock ; three times I flushed him before getting a shot, but at last he was bagged, and we shared him for dinner—I, with my usual generosity, giving a *wing* to each of my pals ! After arriving, ibex were sighted above our camp. Having had enough walking, I left the younger portion of the party to deal with them, and retired for a *siesta*, out of which the servants awakened me, and my first impression was that a general

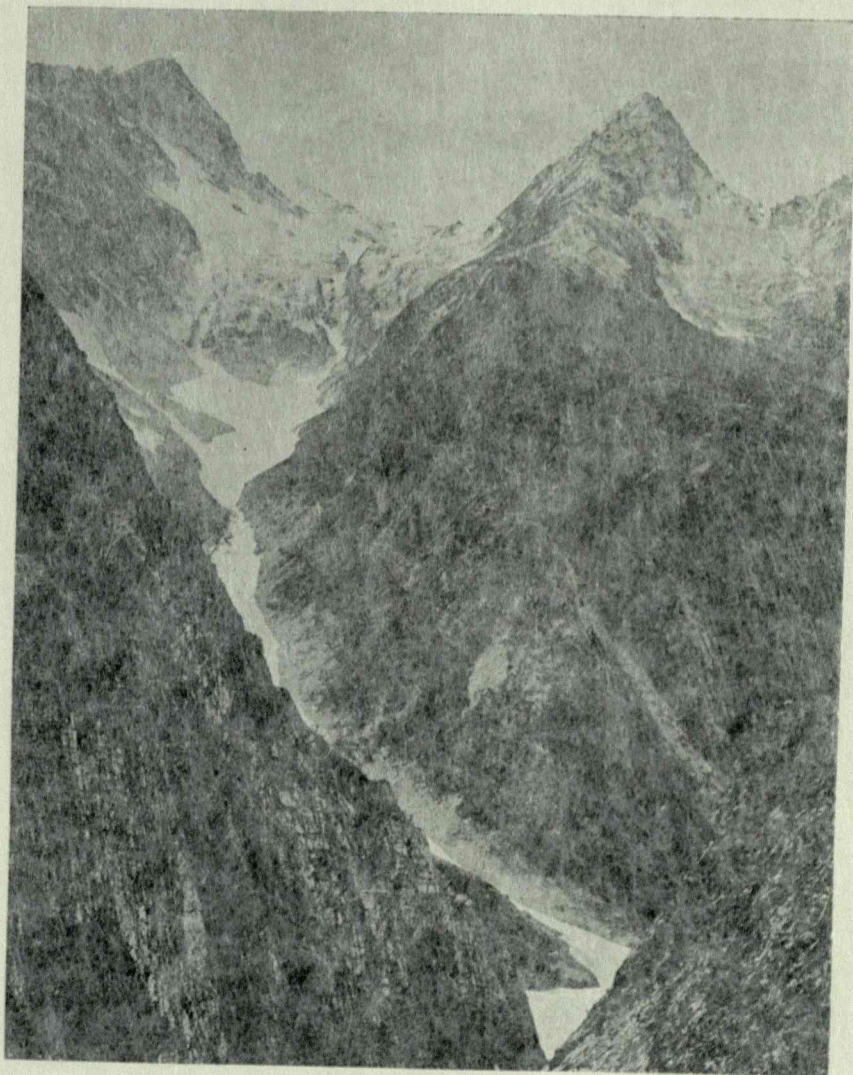
engagement was taking place somewhere in our immediate neighbourhood. Independent firing was certainly going on, and, as my friends had only taken one rifle each, they must have been practising to see how quickly they could load, and I thought it best to send off all available coolies to bring in the spoil; some of them brought back some empty cartridges, which they love as they make them into snuff boxes; but that was all as far as I know.

Next two days marching through rocky uninteresting country about 25 miles a day.

21st.—Camped near Fort, and one of our party enjoyed a game at polo with the Baltis, and created a considerable amount of excitement among the onlookers by doing so; their rules seemed to me elastic, and the game perfectly unintelligible, for, from the time my friend cut in, everybody's hand seemed against him. Later on we had our first experience of a rope bridge; it was out of repair, decidedly dangerous, and my Madras boy was livid with fear. We had to be personally conducted by two coolies, offering up fervent prayers of thanksgiving when safely over. We were received by a Rajah of sorts and his prime minister; both of whom seemed to derive a considerable amount of amusement from watching us dress, and eventually became so aggressive that they had to be turned out by our *shikaris* when our dinner was ready at 11 P.M.

22nd.—Ran the Rajah for polo ponies for the next two marches, and enjoyed a day's rest on horseback.

23rd.—Having decided to part company, and occupy three *nullas*, a division of property became necessary; we divided our

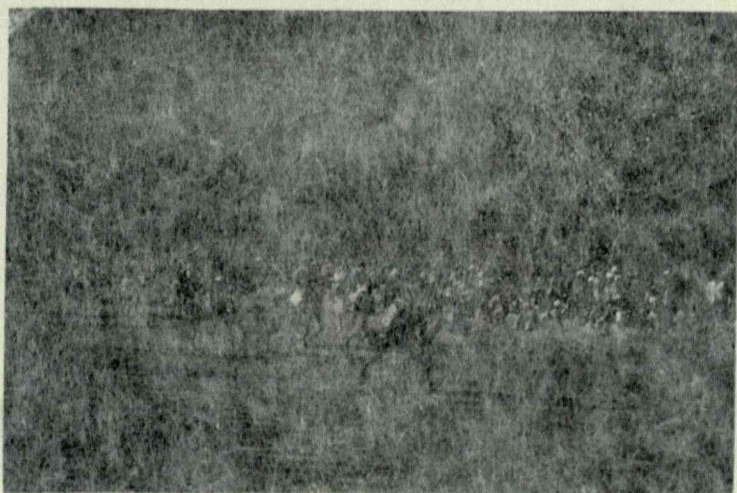


The Zoji Pass in Summer: till June all this is Snow.

A Trip to Kashmir.

35

scanty store of kitchen utensils into three equal parts, and then tossed for first choice of provisions, a bologna sausage being first favourite. With mutual good wishes we parted. Two days marching brought me into the Shigur *nulla*, and, after marching about 250 miles from Srinagar, my rifles at last immersed from their cases.



Native Polo.

For three weeks I occupied this *nulla*, but unfortunately a good deal of this time was spent in bed with a bad attack of dysentery. It got so bad at last that my Madras boy arranged to have me carried down ; he having previously sent for the nearest of my two friends, who arrived just in time with the medicine chest to rebuild my shattered constitution. My stalking was not rewarded with any great amount of success, but I managed to bag five fair ibex. It was the first of May, and we were off from

my tent an hour before daylight, as was my usual custom. A herd, with two good heads, was sighted in the early morning, and the stalk commenced. The ground was exceptionally bad, and it took nearly three hours to get up to the place where we calculated we should see the ibex, most of the way being over rocks covered with snow, and good honest climbing. The ibex, however, had shifted their ground, and were nowhere to be seen. We were as high as they were likely to go, so that there was not much more



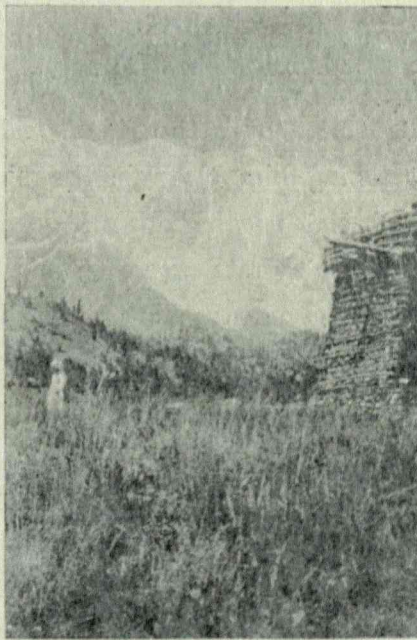
A Halt in the Snow.

uphill work to be done, but the ground was rendered very dangerous by fresh snow and progress slow in consequence ; every step had to be tested before it was actually taken, for we were on the very ridge of the mountain, and crevasses, numerous and deep, were treacherously covered with the recent snow. To add to our difficulty it began to snow again, and sometimes it seemed almost

impossible to move either forwards or backwards. Several hours were spent in this way, though probably the actual distance covered did not amount to more than a mile. Suddenly my *shikari*, who was a yard or two in front, on topping a bank of snow, threw himself down flat, and I crawled up to him. There the ibex were and fortunately the two males were below us, slowly



Natives of Gilgit.



Snow Mountain and Refuge House.

making their way up a ravine unconscious of danger. It looked as if they must pass within 50 yards of us, and I began to speculate as to the length of their horns, and considered them as good as bagged. I was a bit premature, and had omitted to consider one of the greatest difficulties to be encountered in

making a successful stalk, namely, the risk of one of the females sighting one. Some of the "ladies" of the herd were in the rocks above us, and the usual shrill warning whistle told us we were seen. The males, though warned that there was danger, did not know where to look for it, and moved about uneasily. I waited till one gave me a broadside shot at about 120 yards, and then fired; I had the satisfaction of knowing that my bullet had gone home. I devoted my second barrel to the other ibex but missed; hastily reloading, I was just in time to get a snapshot at him as he bolted over the ridge, and this time was more successful, catching him clean in the middle of the back; he crumpled up and went bowling down thousands of feet into the valley below. He, at any rate, was safe, and we devoted our attention to the wounded one, tracking him by his blood on the snow over ground which, in cold blood, any one might have been excused for refusing. A wounded ibex in front of one, however, makes most ground possible; caution was discarded, and the *shikari* and I simply raced on his tracks. Twice we saw him, and once I was within 50 yards of him. I waited a few moments to try and steady myself, which was unfortunate, as the snow came on so thick that I could not see to fire; caution then demanded a retreat while it was possible; for, snowing as it was, there was every chance of our being unable to find our way into the valley below. We found the one ibex safe with the second *shikari* mounting guard over him, and securing his head and skin, made for our camp, which we reached just before dark, having left the second *shikari* in a shepherd's hut to hunt for the wounded one

next day ; he found him dead within 500 yards of where I had last seen him. They were both good heads, and this was my best day.

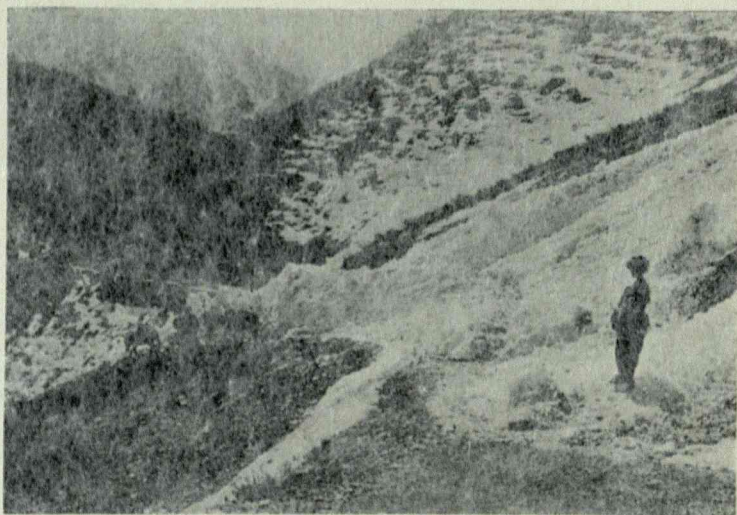
On the 20th of May we again joined forces at Shigur, where we were besieged by the maimed, the halt, and the blind, and expected to heal the sick. The reason of this attack was that we had been asked to prescribe for the good lady of one of the leading men of the district, who had been afflicted with dysentery for six years. We did not see her, but, after an attentive listening to her sym-



Nanga Parbat.

toms as described by her lord and master, we gave a harmless selection of medicine. By some extraordinary accident this, unfortunately for us, cured her, and we were in consequence expected to do the same for various other cases, varying from curvature of the spine, to a baby's leg which had been broken a year before, and

had not happened to set itself straight. We had more vaseline to spare than anything else, so most of them got that. One case only we refused to attempt to cure, that was a man with a hole in his side, which they informed us had been caused by him scratching it because it itched! We thought that if he chose to make burrows in his own side it was none of our business to stop them! Next day we marched to Skardu, and on the way I was



An Avalanche on the Road.

taken ill with what looked suspiciously like cholera. We found a native medical man, who came with the official in charge of that district; on being asked if it was cholera, he referred the matter to the official, who stated that cholera was unknown there. The medical man therefore pronounced that the symptoms were not those of cholera, and prescribed accordingly.



From Skardu we started to march over the Alampi Pass. On the first day's march one of our party unfortunately met with an accident, and damaged his knee-cap. "Necessity is the mother of invention," and it is marvellous what she did for us, and by what extraordinary methods we contrived to keep our wounded friend going; sometimes, when the path was too narrow for a litter, he rode relays of coolies, at others he was carried in his canvas bed, hung, bag-shaped, on a single pole; and finally, when we got on to the snow, he was dragged in a sort of sledge, made of the coverings in which we had carried our tents. The triumphant march when we had got over the summit was a curious sight—four ropes were attached to the back of this impromptu sledge, at the ends of which four coolies acted as drags, while two went in front with ropes to guide.

At Shakurtan we were presented with a curious animal said to be a cross between a markhor and a goat. This unfortunate animal marched with us all the way, though, as we were days on the snow, his food was somewhat limited. He took very kindly to anything he could chew; paper seemed his favourite diet; and this, with an occasional chew at a tent rope, and a lick or two at a piece of soap when he could find it, kept him going till we got into the valleys, where we found a rich and luxurious growth of grass—richer feeding than he had probably ever seen before. His sides swelled visibly; when he could no longer stand to eat he lay down, but still continued eating. This curious animal caused us considerable inconvenience on the march down, and from Baramula to Pindi he occupied an ekha, a servant

having to go with him to hold him in ; we brought him in triumph to Calcutta, where his marvellous constitution sustained him during four and-a-half years of overfeeding, but he at last



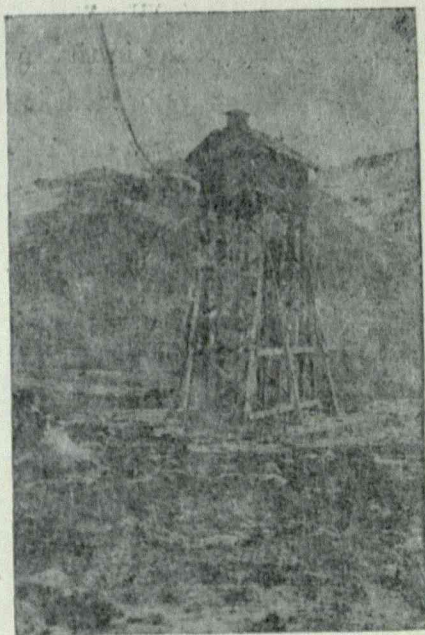
Hybrid Goat-Markhor.

succumbed to fatty degeneration of the heart. We approached the Alampi with the greatest caution, determined not to be caught as



we were over the Zojila. We did short marches up to the very foot of the pass, being camped on the snow the last two nights; the weather favoured us, and starting an hour before daylight, when the snow was hard, we got over without difficulty. The Alampi is over 17,000 feet, and never have I seen such a perfect view as was obtained from the summit; nowhere in any direction was anything to be seen but absolutely pure white snow, range after range of snow mountains, culminating in that noble peak, Nanga Parbat, which towers so majestically over all its neighbours that it looks as if it began where the others ended. Of all the views I have had of Nanga Parbat, this is unquestionably the finest, and even though we stood at 17,000 feet, we had literally to look right up into the sky to see its summit. Our march from there was uneventful till we arrived on the Gilgit road; from here our coolies insisted on returning home, and we were stranded till fortunately some unladen ponies on their way to bring up Government stores from Bundipore passed that way, and by bribery and threats we induced the owners to load them with our baggage. The next obstacle we encountered was the Barzil Pass; though not so high it can be dangerous at times, and many lives have been lost there. After this marching is easy, as there is an excellent road just wide enough for a gun carriage; it is the work of Mr. Mitchell, of Messrs. Spedding & Co., and is a triumph of engineering. It passes through Minnmerg, and the lovely valley of Gurrais, where Mr. Mitchell has a beautifully situated house in which he is always delighted to offer hospitality to all. We continued our most enjoyable march through some of the loveliest

scenery imaginable, and the last day were making a strong bid to get to Bundipore, where boats, with all conceivable kinds of luxuries in the shape of food and drink, were ordered to meet us. I was riding on ahead feeling the very reverse of cheerful, having just been informed that it was impossible to reach Bundipore that day. For ten days we had not had a drop of liquor, our supplies



Shelter House in the Barzil Pass.

having run short, and precious little to eat. Imagine therefore my feelings when, on turning a corner, I saw a lovely camp with two large comfortable looking tents. An Englishman walked out to meet me, and his greeting of "Good evening : will you come in and have a peg ?" changed my feelings in a moment. I had not seen sodawater for about six weeks. I was tired,



hungry and thirsty. Would I have a peg ! would I have twenty blessed pegs ! If I could possibly swallow them. My deliverer turned out to be Mr. Olpherts, of the Telegraph Department. He was camped there with his charming wife, who made us most welcome, in spite of our want of any decent clothes, and we were given not only pegs, but tea accompanied by most delicious cake, and further regaled by one of the most enjoyable dinners it has ever been my good fortune to participate in. We did not leave to go to our tents till it was so late that we were ashamed to stay longer, and, on our way to our humble camp, we agreed that though the dinner was excellent, and we were hungry and had been half-starved for weeks, we enjoyed the society more than the food.

CHAPTER V.

IBEX REMINISCENCE.



WHEN one once begins to spin shooting yarns they spring up and jostle each other like sheep going through a gate ; so many have been looked upon at the time as the best, and are stored away in one's memory as bright happy reminiscences of good times, that the owner of these reminiscences can hardly fancy there is any one in the world so dull that he will not enjoy the hearing as much as the speaker enjoys the " bucking." I will, however, remember that my publisher charges for every word he prints, and curb my desire to tell of all the glorious times that were mine in days gone by. Only one other stalk shall find place here, though there are many of which I would like to tell, some resulting in " heads," others only living in one's memory, unrepresented by any noble pair of horns to point to as one leads up to the story,—one that one always begins by picking out as the favourite pair out of the long line of trophies such as I gaze at as I write.

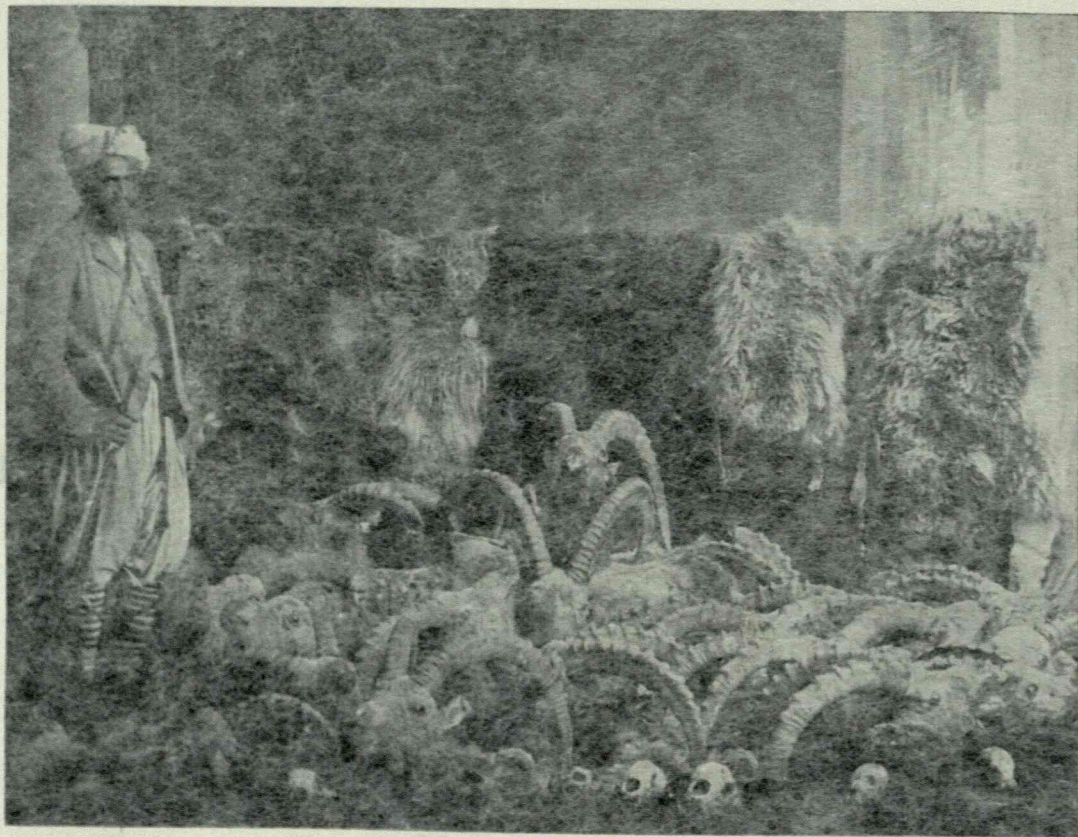
I have often found that a kill is by no means necessary to complete a real good day's enjoyment. The stalk is the part



which thorough sportsmen enjoy most ; one of the most enjoyable days I ever had in Kashmir consisted of a five hours' stalk. I outmanœuvred the ibex in every way and landed myself within 100 yards of the whole herd, without their having the slightest idea that there was any danger menacing them, only to find that there was not a pair of horns over 30 inches amongst the lot, and consequently I did not fire at them, much to my *shikari's* disgust, who whispered persistently for about 10 minutes—"Chalis inch waller" (40 inch chap); it was the flesh he coveted, not the horns; but there had been plenty food in the camp for their requirements, and I declined to accept his estimate. If food is actually wanted, and I cannot get a shootable male, I always take a young female; there are plenty of these, and it is better than destroying a male which will be a respectable trophy in a year or two. After watching this herd for half an hour or so, I showed myself, and the sight of them going up a rock which looked as if nothing without wings could possibly climb it, quite rewarded me for my labours, and I returned to my camp feeling very virtuous and contented, in spite of my *shikari's* sulks. But to return to the stalk referred to. We were camped in one of the loveliest spots which I have ever succeeded in getting my tents pitched on. In all my shooting expeditions the selection of the camping ground has always been a bone of contention between me and my *shikari*; his idea is to be as near as possible to a village; mine just the reverse; on this occasion we were both fairly well satisfied for, within a mile of a small mountain village, I found a pretty cluster of magnificent pine

trees on the side of a hill with green turf that would have done credit to any park at home. The previous evening we had sighted a very fine red bear, but when we saw him it was too late to undertake the stalk. We started at daybreak next morning in hopes of finding him, but before we were half an hour from camp ibex were seen; the telescope showed us that there were at least two good males, so we decided to go for them.

The pony which I had been riding was sent back to camp, as it is impossible to risk anything when ibex are in sight; an hour and a half's toil brought us to the ridge of a spur leading up to the snow and rocks where the ibex were. Then our climb began. One side of the spur was easy enough going, but it was full in view of our game, and consequently was not to be thought of; the other side was at first, what I have always found the hardest ground to travel over in the Himalayas, namely, a loose gravely shale; it seems always more or less on the move, every step feels uncertain, resting is impossible, and the only way to get over it is to keep going as fast as possible, using one's toes, which with grass shoes are free, and sometimes most useful; on this ground one slip would be fatal for, once started, it would be almost impossible to check oneself however expert one might be in the use of a climbing stick; there is no holding for it, and there is nearly always a precipice of at any rate a hundred feet or so somewhere handy. This part accomplished we found in our line a cliff which at first looked impassible; my *shikari* was a fine cragsman, and he found a way somehow; many times I was solely dependant for my safety on the grasp of his hand.



Our Bag.



Such ground as this requires a head that cannot fail, for often one is literally hanging over a sheer drop of three or four hundred feet. After this we came to snow where every footstep had to be cut, such ground as would not be considered safe in the Alps without at least two guides; in the Himalayas ropes are not used, every one depends on himself for his own security, but the snow is safer than the rocks, for with care each step can be made secure. Six hours from the start brought us into the rocks on a line with where the ibex had been seen, and I halted for a rest and refreshment, sending my *shikari* on to spy. He reported the enemies' position unchanged, and we continued our course; another hour brought us within sight of the ibex. They were resting for the day, and we were within about 300 yards of them. There was no possible way by which we could get near, and the only thing to be done was to wait in the hopes that they might move to a more suitable place when they began their evening feeding. It was bitterly cold lying up amongst the snow even in the sun. The only place I could find at all free from snow was a jutting out bit of the rock, on which grew some stunted shrubs; they formed a resting-place like an eagle's nest, and in this I curled myself up, and slept for a bit; I woke to find that I had shoved one of my feet through the growth of shrubs, and in the vista I had made I saw the valley many thousand feet below. I slept no more! About 4-30 the ibex began to move, first one and then another, rising and stretching themselves: they wandered about for a bit before we could decide which way they were going, then apparently suddenly making up their mind they started in a

direction which would bring them straight below us. Not a moment was to be lost, for there was but one place from which we could hope for a shot. For this we went all we knew, and reached it not a minute too soon for in another ten yards we should be full in view. I tried to pull myself together, but the rush had been too much for me and my hand shook like a reed shaken in the wind, and my first bullet flew harmlessly over the ibex's back, much to my *shikari's* disgust. Caution was now useless, and he simply yelled at me, "*Nei lugga, deucera goli fegdo*" (not hit, throw another bullet). I "threw" the other bullet, but alas! with the same result, the ibex were now in full flight. I had only one rifle with me that day, so I reloaded as quickly as possible. There was no time to aim for the biggest male was rapidly nearing the brow of a small hill, once over which he would be lost. Bang, bang, went the second right and left, the ibex stumbled as he topped the brow and I triumphantly though by no means confidently, stated "*Lugga hai*" (he's hit). My *shikari* had not got over the disgust of my first miss, and scornfully replied, "*Nei Sahib*" (No, Sir). Instigated by hope I seized my stick and, regardless of precipices and falls, made for where I had last fired. Where the ibex had stumbled in the snow, I found some blood which encouraged me to continue my wild career, calling at the same time frantically for my rifle. Arriving at the crest of the hill I saw my victim standing within about fifty yards of me and longed for my rifle. As soon as he saw me he bolted so fast that I feared the wound was a trifling one: by the time the rifle reached me, he was too

far to make any certainty of a shot—two more bullets were wasted. I sat down in the snow and could have cried out of sheer misery : pursuit was useless, and I contented myself with watching through my glasses ; he continued his career downward which gave me some hopes, for an ibex will seldom go down hill after he is fired at unless he is hit badly. At last he stumbled and fell, only to rise again and continue his course, but it was his supreme effort, and in ten yards more he was down never to rise again. The bullet, a 450 express, had caught him in the ribs, and it is wonderful how he travelled so far. So ended one of the longest and most fatiguing stalks which have fallen to my lot.

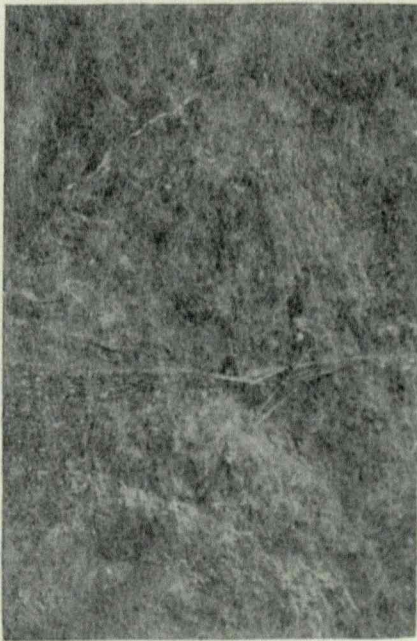
Before closing the subject of ibex-shooting, there are two points on which a warning may not go out of place. A sportsman will probably find that most ibex which he stalks are said to be *chalis inch wallahs*. If he is unfortunate enough to miss, the *shikari* will look at him in a sad but reproachful way and meekly state that his (the *shikari's*) *kismet* is bad, implying plainly, however, by his looks that he has done his best, but that his *Sahib* cannot shoot. If the ibex is killed, it will very likely be found to have horns nearer 30 than 40 inches.

The other trick which is frequently played on a novice is even worse. He is asked to fire at a long range ; the shot is greeted with triumphant cries from the *shikari* of "*Lugga hai*"—he is hit. Away goes the ibex, but the *shikari* states that he is confident that it will be found. Arrangements are made to send a man out next day to hunt for the wounded animal. The man will probably not return for two days ; he will then turn up smiling



with a pair of good horns and a terrible description of the hardships he has undergone in following up the wounded animal, which, if the *shikari's* hopes are realized, will result in a few rupees *bakshees*. As a matter of fact, the man has probably had a long tramp, but not after the ibex ; he has been down to some village, where he has been able to purchase a pair of decent horns which have belonged to some ibex shot by the natives during the winter. The best way to avoid being made a victim by this trick is to refuse to accept any horns unless the skin of the head is brought in with them. It is curious to hear the description given by a *shikari* of some gentleman's bag made the previous year. He will tell you in a native way that so and so got seven ibex—four he shot, and three his *shikari* gave him.

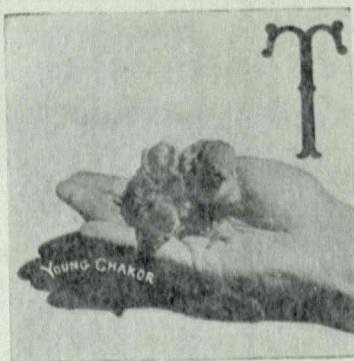
The above remarks of course do not refer to the *good shikaris*. There *are* good men, and very good men, but unless they are engaged well in advance, it is almost impossible to get them. Much depends on the sportman himself, for the Kashmiri is very cute in adapting himself to the ways of his master, and if he finds that hard work does not find favour, he will take his master to places where the climbing is easy, but probably no heads worth shooting. I once found a *shikari* I knew to be a good man, loafing about the road, looking the picture of misery, and he informed me that he could not get his master away from the camp, that he preferred reading books to shooting, and that he had not even brought a pair of glasses. The disgust with which he mentioned this last fact showed what he thought of his master.



A Primitive Bridge.

CHAPTER VI.

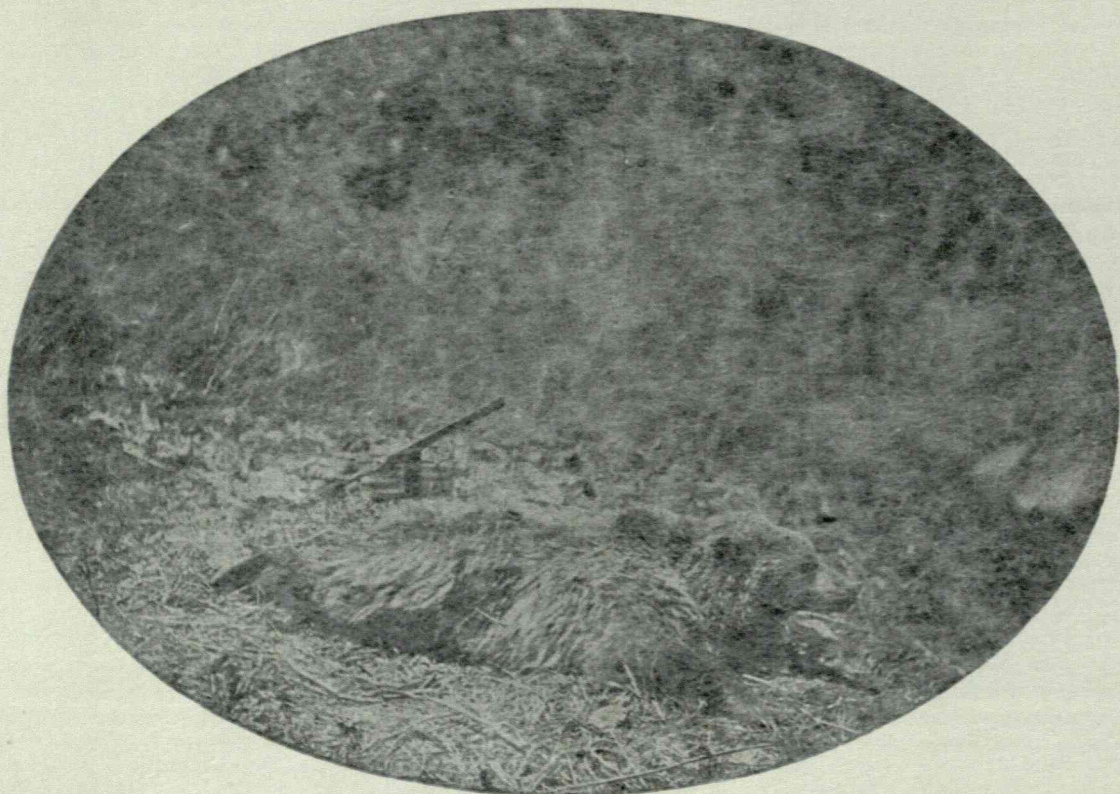
SHOOTING IN EARNEST : SECOND GRADE.



THOUGH possibly a degree lower than ibex shooting, Red Bears are by no means to be despised ; they are found on easier ground, and in stalking them one has not the excitement of dangerous climbing. On the other hand, a wounded bear is given to charging if you happen to be below him, whereas an ibex is not. As regards the difficulty of the approach a bear's sight is not keen ; but his sense of smell is marvellous. The morning and the evening are the times when one sees him and are also the times when the changes in the wind are frequent and sudden. Many a careful stalk is spoilt by an unexpected shift in the wind, and one whiff in the wrong direction is quite enough to make Mr. Bruin clear from even the best of feeding grounds. Red Bears are found as a rule just below the snow line, and the best skins are to be got early in the season soon after they emerge from their winter sleep. Later on, they are occasionally found in the forests, but those shot in such places never have such good coats. As is frequently the



Marching in the Higher Levels.

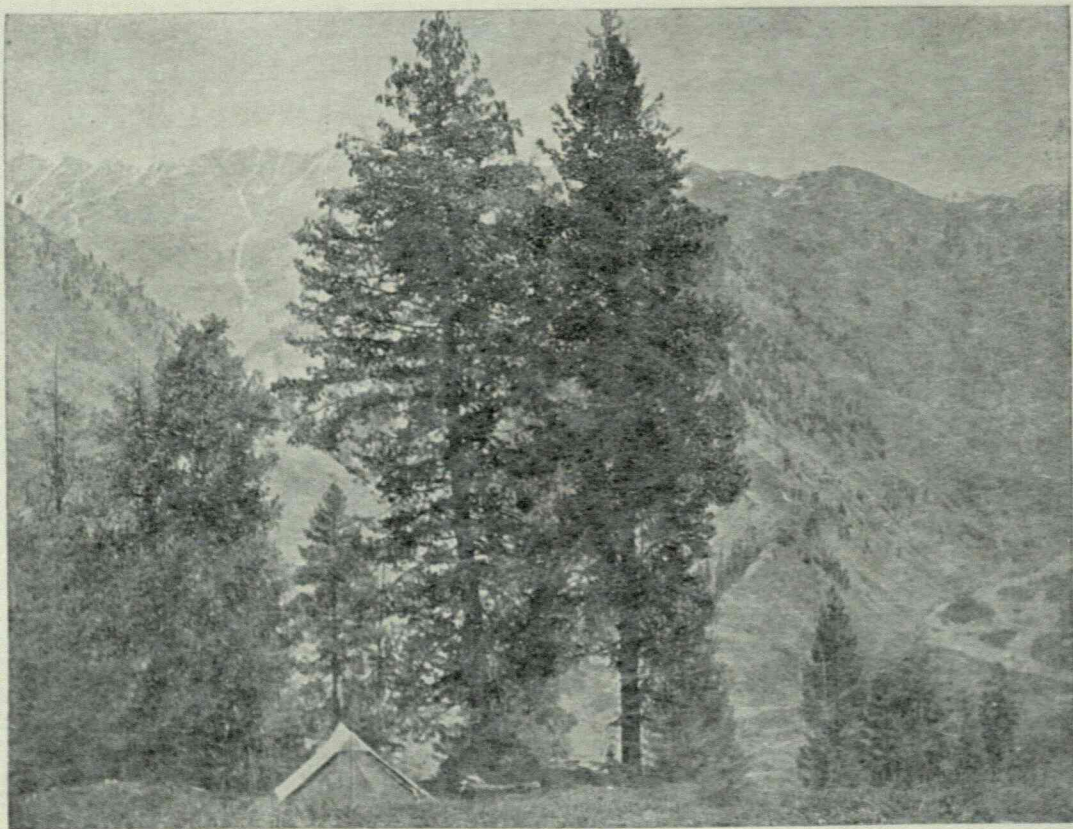


A Red Bear.

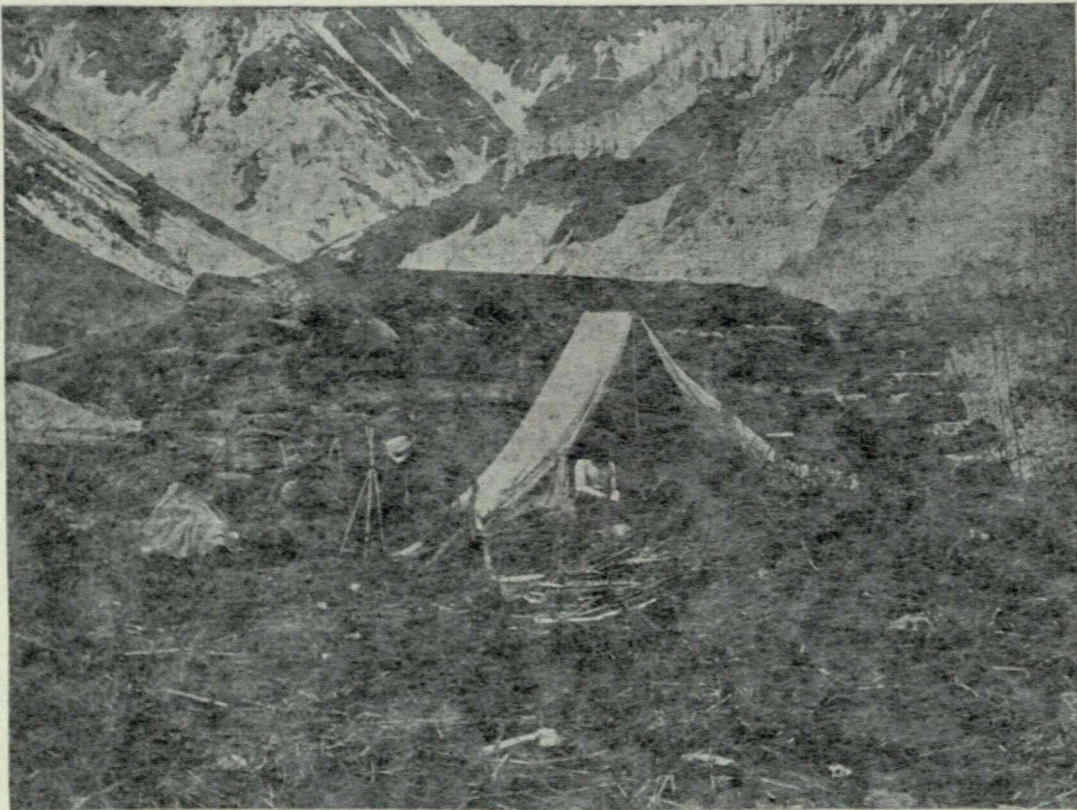


case, one of my best days with Red Bear happened when it was least expected. We were camped on the Gilgit road, two marches beyond Gurais. Two of us were marching together, and the *khub-ber* brought in by the *shikaris* in the evening, was one bear. My friend went after this, and I went in the opposite direction where it was said there were no tracks. Not expecting to find anything I took with me one weapon only, a handy little German gun, .450 in the right barrel, and a 20-smooth bore in the left. After going some way up the valley we spotted a bear; he was low down, and the stalk was an easy one. I knocked him over with my first barrel at about 60 yards, and as he was still kicking, I gave him the 20 bullet, as I thought to keep him quiet. It seemed to have just the reverse effect; he got up and bolted. Quickly reloading, I knocked him down again; this time he rolled out of sight, and I thought he was settled. Imagine therefore my feelings when, on getting to the place where I expected to find him dead, I saw him making tracks up the opposite hill! Two more shots I fired, one of which I found afterwards had hit him on the leg, and then I started to give chase, but soon found that he was travelling faster than I could. We went up a bit of a hill opposite him and watched. Would he never stop! hundred yards after hundred yards he plodded along now right up in the snow; his pace was not good but his progress was sure; at last he came to a birchwood high up on the mountain, where we lost sight of him. For a good hour we watched, during which vigil I had my breakfast; once he emerged but soon went back again, and we thought it was time to follow

him up. After a pretty stiff climb, we came to the wood and found his tracks. I impressed upon the *shikari* the necessity of keeping above where the bear was likely to be; soon we found that he had been rampaging about the wood, so that it was impossible to say where he was. This added considerable excitement to the chase, for should we happen to approach him from below, the chances were that he would get one of us. I took my rifle, and with the "decks cleared for action" started tracking. Progress was slow, for the snow was soft by this time, and every footstep had to be built up so as to prevent rolling snow balls and giving him notice of our presence; at last we spotted him lying curled up like a cat on a flat piece of ground. A careful aim and a .450 bullet crashed into him, the 20-bore catching him as he staggered to his feet, and down he went fetching up against a tree, hopelessly crippled but still alive, and a *coup de grace* had to be given him before we could go near him, this being the seventh bullet he had received. To save carriage we sledged him down on the snow, and nearly lost him by our laziness; fortunately I had gone on in front, and close to the river my tiffin coolie joined me; we saw the carcase coming bowling down and stationed ourselves by the river to receive it. We were only just able, with the help of our climbing sticks, to stop his career within a yard or two of the river, into which had he gone we should probably have lost him, as it ran for about a mile underneath the snow. By the time the skinning operation was over it was fairly late in the day, and we were not expecting to see anything more. We started for



Red Bear Camp.



Camp near Shepherd's Hut.



camp, but we had not gone far when suddenly a bear was seen right up on the ridge of the snow hill opposite us; this bear seemed out for the day; he was probably travelling and did not comply with the ordinary rules recognized by bears regarding a rest during the middle of the day. He was evidently in good spirits and intended to enjoy himself, for his antics were more like those of a playful kitten than a sedate bear; he sat on his hind quarters and tobogganed down the snow slopes, turned somersaults, buried his head in the snow, rolled in it; eat it, and otherwise amused himself. He was quite the finest bear I have ever seen, and his coat seemed so long that it trailed in the snow; his colour almost a pale-yellow, altogether a beast to be desired and shot if possible. While he was moving about so rapidly it was useless to try and stalk him; from ravine to ravine he went, sometimes pausing to eat a little, but never staying long, till he got to one place which seemed to satisfy him, and we determined to make one effort, as the position was suitable for a stalk.

A long climb was necessary before we dared enter the ravine in which he was feeding; as we topped the ridge into it, for a moment or two I thought I felt the wind on my back; on testing it, however, with some dried grass, all seemed right, and we continued. Everything was in our favour, a rugged rocky spur leading right out into the feeding ground in which we had seen him; along this we climbed, and at last thought we had him within our reach, but nowhere was he to be seen; we found out afterwards from our tiffin coolie that as we topped the ridge, where I thought I had felt the wind behind me, the bear had



bolted. There can have been only just one whiff, but it was enough for him, and though we tracked him for miles, we never saw him again. He was the finest bear I have ever seen, and I spent two days in trying to locate him ; but he was evidently on the march and not intended for me.

Another experience I had with a red bear shows how one's wits sometime help, even more than the greatest care and endurance in a stalk ; it was years ago, and I was young to the game. I had left the stalk to my *shikari*, as perhaps a young sportsman is wise to do, and he made a hopeless mess of it, as they frequently do ; the bear got our wind, and I saw him executing a somewhat rapid retreat. In a moment I saw what had happened, and my first idea was "swear words" for the *shikari* ; soon my feelings were relieved, and I was ready for more profitable action. There was just one chance, and that was to cut him off. I ran all I knew for the spot which seemed to me nearest where he must pass, and arrived there just in time to see my bear going up hill at a most respectable pace through some scrub jungle ; it was a nasty place for a running shot. I remembered that a whistle is said to excite the curiosity of an animal more than almost anything and collected the few remnants of breath I had for a good blow. It acted like a charm ; the bear stopped dead and gave me a fair shot at about 120 yards. The bullet fetched home, and down he went ; quickly reloading, down I went after him, and soon found him hitched up against a bush. I was a bit short of ammunition and grudged another bullet, so I crawled up as close as I could get to him, and opened fire with my Irish

constabulary revolver. I could not see him very clearly and mistook the end ! The first shot therefore had little effect, except to make him move and show me the mistake I had made. The next shot was well directed and caught him just behind the ear, but had no visable result. The third also was well directed, but only seemed to act as a stimulant, and he made his final effort to rush me. I had to clear out, and, having lost confidence in my "Irish constabulary," finished him off with a ball from my gun. The revolver bullets had not even penetrated the skull, and convinced me that, however useful they may be for landlords, these revolvers are not manufactured for bear-killing. The whistling tip is a good one, and I have tried it several times with excellent results on game in jungle, though this is the only time I have had a chance of employing my orchestra to charm a bear.

CHAPTER VII.

SHOOTING AS A PASTIME.



WE now come to Black Bear shooting, or what may be termed "Shooting as a pastime," and it is considered the lowest form of big game in Kashmir. This is not on account of the animal himself, for he is game to the backbone and always ready for a charge when he gets the chance ; in fact a wounded black bear is every bit as dangerous as a wounded tiger, but the hunting of him entails less hardship and fatigue. Any man can have a shot at a black bear long after age or stiffness of limb and shortness of breath have made him leave the pursuit of ibex, &c., to the younger sportsmen. Nature has not given black bears the keen eyesight of ibex and such like animals, nor the power of smelling which protects his red brothers ; on the other hand, his habits are more nocturnal, and he only leaves the thick jungle about dusk and returns as soon as day breaks.



The "General" and his Staff.



There are no long marches required to get to the hunting grounds, for black bears are to be found almost everywhere, and one can have one's camp pitched in a comfortable spot near a village where provisions are obtainable, and arrangements made for bread, soda-water and other luxuries to be brought frequently from Srinagar. As soon as the mulberries begin to ripen the bears come down to feed upon them, and the usual way of getting a shot at them is to watch about the edge of the jungles at dusk. Sometimes a shot may be got in the early morning, but as a rule Mr. Bruin is off into the jungles almost before it is light enough to see to shoot; thus one has only the chance of a shot for an hour or at most an hour and a half in the 24, and the whole of the day has to be spent in camp. Some are shot in this way, but the most are killed by "honking," that is, driving the woods. The *shikari* should be out before daybreak, and by tracking, or possibly seeing him, he manages to locate the bear; he then arranges with the villagers, and from 20 to 50 turn out with sticks, hatchets and perhaps tom-toms; and if there are two or three guns, and the *shikari* knows the ground, and how to place them, it is probable some one will get a shot.

There is one other way of shooting black bear, but it is a somewhat unusual one. The idea certainly came as a novelty to me when, on my last trip to Kashmir, my *shikari* proposed walking them up! We were marching through a country where there were certainly bears, but we could not collect enough beaters; that was the reason of his singular proposal. The novelty of the idea tickled me, and was, I thought, quite worth trying, but I

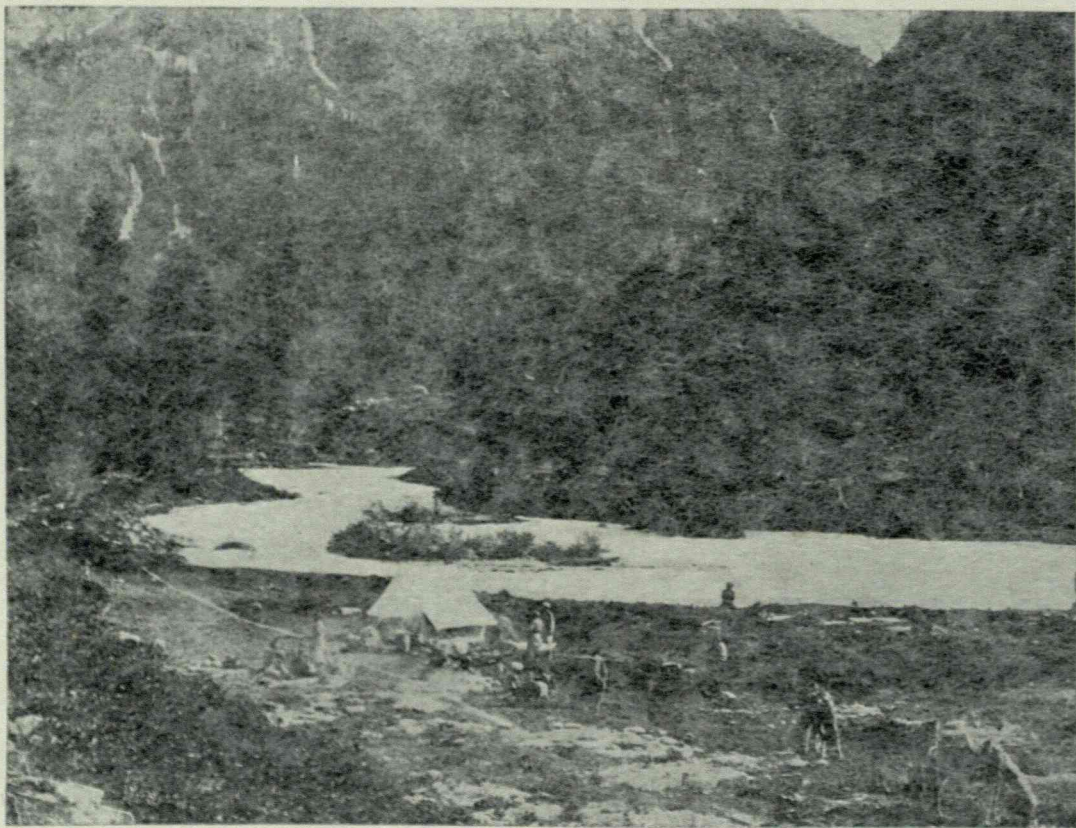


soon got tired of it ; long tramps through thick jungles grow somewhat monotonous, and though twice in three days I had the excitement of hearing a grunt, which I recognised, and a crashing through the thick underwood, I saw nothing. On the fourth day I was more fortunate, and by good luck we stumbled right on the top of a sleeping bear ; I don't know which was most surprised, the hunter or the hunted ; he hesitated a moment whether to resent the intrusion or bolt, which gave me time to get my rifle, and a lucky shot finished him off.

Perhaps on the whole "honking" is the best fun, though it does seem taking rather a mean advantage of the poor beasts. The two best days I have had were in the neighbourhood of Sopur, where I went with a friend whom I had christened the "Doctor" on account of the large medicine chest he always carried with him, the contents of which he administered in a most ruthless way to any native who thought he was not feeling quite well. We did not know enough of the language to diagnose the symptoms, so probably some of the doses were not quite correct, but I think the drugs must have been more or less harmless, as no charge of murder was brought against us during our stay, and we had the satisfaction of feeling that we had done our best. We had a strong force of *shikaris* ; as we each had a headman and an underman, besides a local nimrod, we engaged to help to get beaters. The "Doctor's" head *shikari* took such complete charge of the whole force that we named him the "General," and certainly he was a marvel, for he seemed to know exactly which line of country every bear would take, and how to beat for him.



The Army.



River Camp.



The "General" had one excellent idea, which was, to save his master all the fatigue he could, his theory being to reserve all the going power till it was actually required; one never does know when, or how much, of this may be required when it comes to following up a wounded beast. So we did our shooting in comfort, and found "hacks" ready to take us to "covert," on which we could enjoy our after-breakfast cheroot, riding through beautiful scenery. On our first day we drew several outlying coverts blank; we were evidently doing what a gallant member of the Calcutta Light Horse (the officer has now found the enemy or rather the enemy has found him and shut him up in Ladysmith) once told me he was doing, when I reproached him for loafing about the Zeerut bridge instead of joining in the wild activity of the rest of his brave companions-in-arms, namely, "feeling for the enemy." It was not till after tiffin that we attacked the jungle proper, and I was posted in a place which I considered singularly improper from a cautious point of view. I was *in* the jungle, being only able to see about 10 yards in the direction from which the bear was expected. A strategic retreat, either to the rear or in any other direction, was impossible, for there was a sheer drop of about 100 feet behind me, whereas, had I returned the way I came, I should have gone straight to where I knew the "Doctor" was, and probably have been mistaken for a bear. There was nothing for it but to "stand fast." During the waiting I looked several times at my '577 to make sure all was ready; fortunately it was so, for when the time came for action there was no time to spare. Without any warning there was a crash

in the bushes above me, and a huge black thing was precipitated into my view. Bang, bang, went my two barrels, a crash in the bushes below, two grunts, and silence ! whether the bear was hit or not, I could not tell. He had not spoken to the shot, as they generally do when they are hit, but he had roared twice in the jungle below, and I had hopes. As soon as the beaters were near enough to make any more "black precipitations" unlikely, I crawled into the jungle with my rifle all ready, as it was very thick, and a possible wounded bear makes one careful. The first glad tidings I got was an extensive splotch of blood, which showed damage had been done, and we expected ructions, but a few yards further showed us our enemy calmly sleeping his last sleep, for he was as dead as a stone. So finished our first day under the "General." Our next was more exciting. He had sent for his pack of "Bear hounds;" this pack had once numbered fifteen, but disease, bears and leopards had accounted for a dozen of them, and only three remained; sturdy, thick-set little beasts, who seemed to fear neither man nor beast, nor anything else except their master and his son, who had perfect control over them.

This time I was pleased to find my position was more in the open; the bear came, but not very near, and I had to run for a shot. He was travelling faster than I thought, and the bullet caught him right "aft." He got back into the jungle before I could put in my left, amidst the triumphant shouts of my staff, "lugga hai, lugga hai, sahib." These shouts had a marvellous effect on the beaters. Probably never before had they so clearly

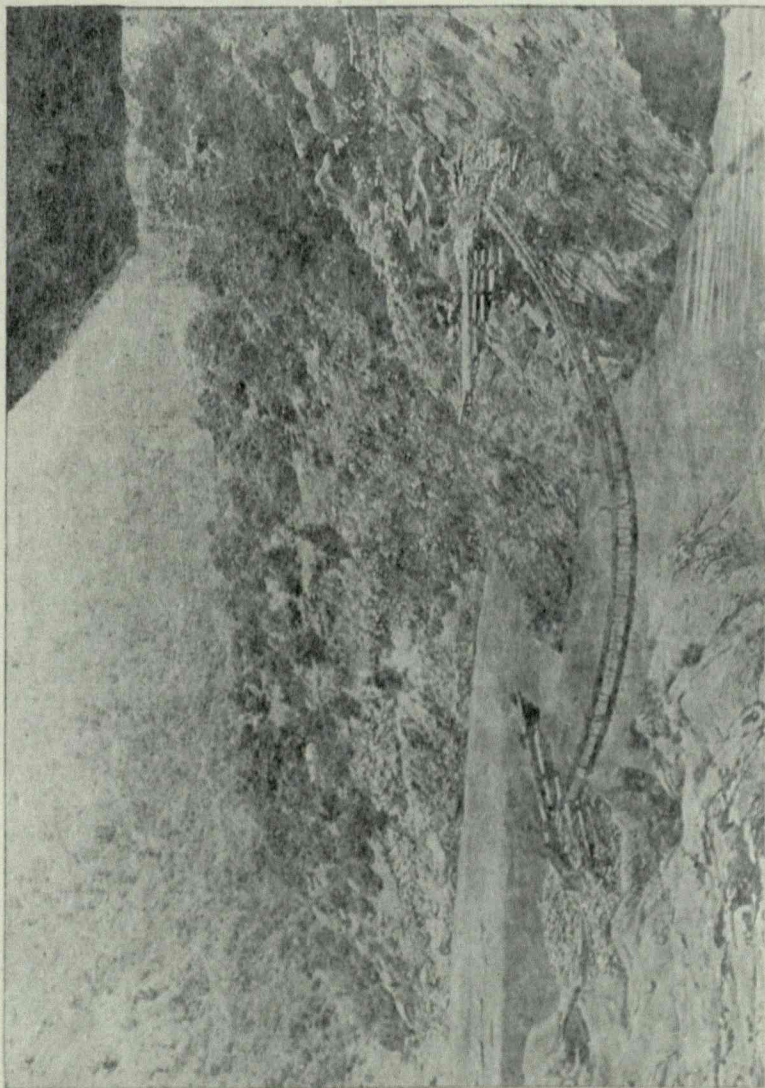


Photo by Bourne & Shepherd.

Bridge constructed of Twigs on the Chenab.

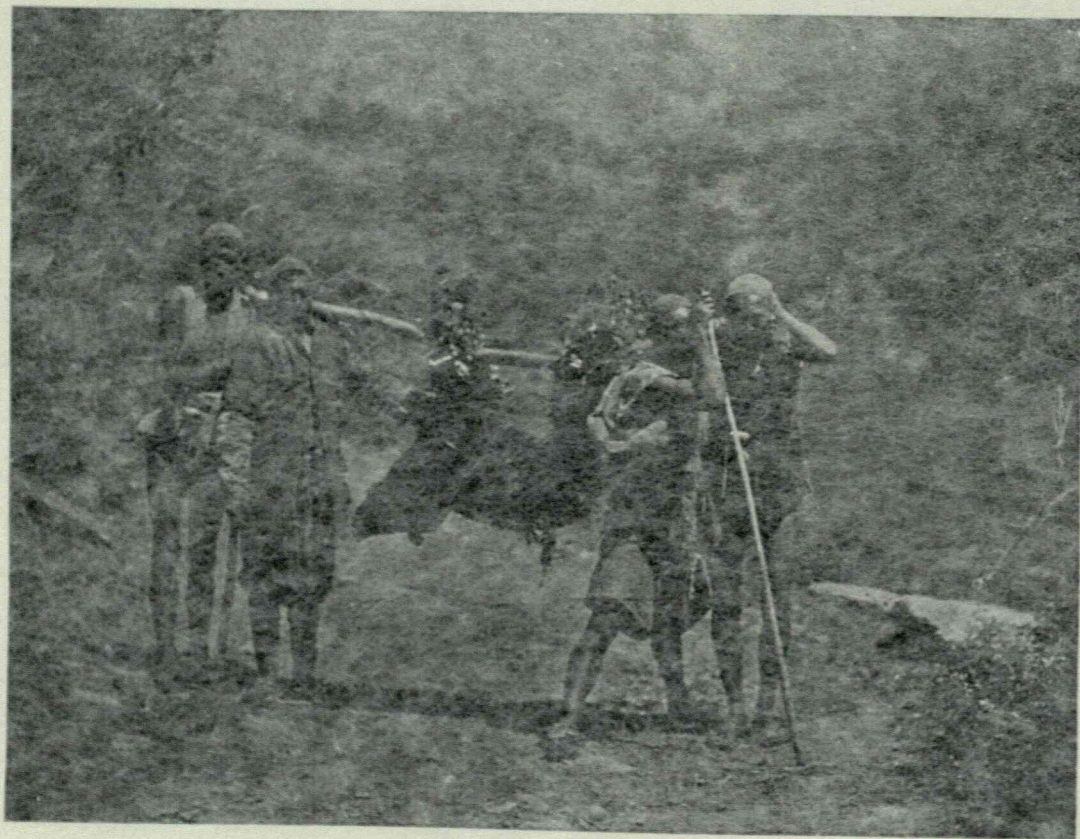
shown their descent from the monkey tribe. Almost in a moment they all occupied commanding, but from my point of view somewhat useless, positions in trees. My bear broke back through the line, or rather through the place where the line should have been, for, like the ropes of the new starting machine, the barrier was raised. The Doctor joined me, and we made for the other side of the jungle, presently, when I was praying for my "second wind" of boyhood's days, which alas! now cometh not; I was delighted to see my pony. There was an open stretch in front of us, so on to him I got and set off at a gallop. The ground in front began to look like bad going, and I took a pull at him, which only resulted in the bit coming out of his mouth, as his head gear had not been fixed! The coolie in charge *had* made some remarks as I mounted, but the somewhat forcible language used by me, when he tried to prevent me starting, set him thinking a bit and me riding a bitless pony. We were going in the right direction so I just let him rip, and prayed my rifle might not be smashed in the fall.

A fallen tree brought him up, and the clear space having ended, I resumed my race on foot.

I had heard the dogs giving tongue, and one yelling as if he had had about enough of bears; but they were now quiet, and it seemed as if either they were all dead, or had lost their prey. For about twenty minutes there was silence. The "Doctor" and I were ready and listening. Presently below where he was on watch, a still small whimper was raised. It sounded almost like a protest from the dog—"Why don't you help me with this big



black brute?" It was enough to indicate their whereabouts, and the "Doctor" was into the jungle like a rabbit. His arrival on the scene of action was announced by furious barking on the part of the dogs and awe-inspiring roars from the bear. The jungle was too thick to see the bear plainly, but he fired, in order to relieve the dogs, as they were having a bad time of it; more roaring and most enthusiastic barking from the dogs, and off set the bear with a .500 bullet in her ribs. She came my way fortunately, and my fun began. The jungle was chiefly composed of thorns, and removed a considerable portion of my clothing and some skin as well. Down we went, but just too late to cut off the bear. The dogs were well on her tracks, and very brave now they knew there were rifles about. Progress was slow, and they were always just ahead of me or just above, or just below; when they were just above, I felt a bit uncomfortable, for a bear charging downhill in a jungle like that, though it may be exciting at the moment, is only likely to end one way; the beast was never more than 40 yards away and often within 10. At last she tired a bit, and the dogs got her to bay with her back in a thick bush. She was not 10 yards off, but I could not see her plainly and crawled nearer still. A roar and a frantic rush at the dogs, rather made me jump, but it showed more clearly where she was. Having cleared her "front," she got back into her stronghold in the bush, where a .577 bullet at 5 yards put an end to the fight. We had had a real good two hours in the jungle with that bear, and she died real game.



Bringing Him in.



First Day's Bag.

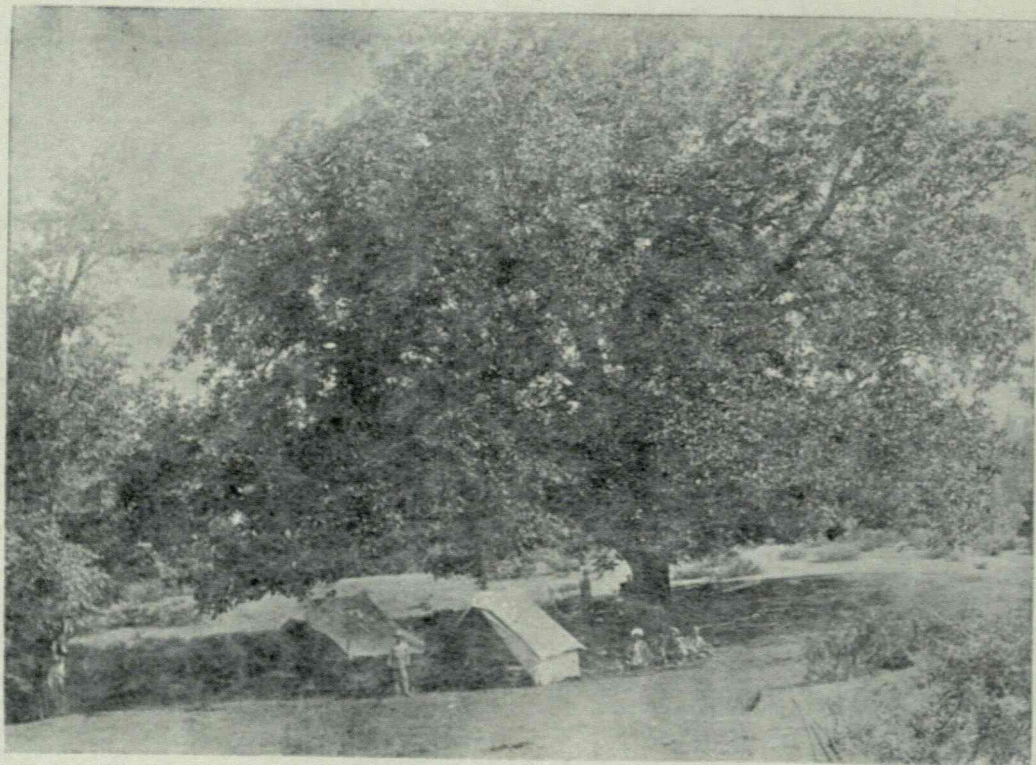


The method pursued by these dogs in hunting bears is worthy of mention. Pretty nearly the only parts of the bear on which they can make any impression are the paws. Their own safety prevents their attacking the front paws, but in walking the bear lifts its hind paws very high and exposes the soles; these the dogs go for and worry at them with their teeth till he turns to bay, then the dogs separate and beat a hasty retreat; he probably charges one, when the others scuttle round and get a chance of taking him in the rear again. This goes on until the bear makes a bolt for it, when all the dogs again join in the paw-worrying job. The "General" had explained this method of attack to us, but we regarded it rather as a *shikari's* story, until we saw this bear after death and found that the hard soles of her hind paws were completely torn off. Instinct must have taught the dogs where to go for, for, of course, with the long hair and thick skin which a bear has got, they could make no impression anywhere else. The dogs were thoroughly exhausted after their two hours' hunt, and all of them bore marks of the fray.

The dogs lived in our camp. I can't say they slept there, for I don't believe they ever did sleep, and they did not seem to consider it necessary to let us sleep either, for every half hour or so we were awoke by the most almighty canine battles raging just outside our tents; one of the chief features of which seemed to be the use made of the tent ropes. If these battles were as bloody as they were noisy, the village dogs must have had a bad time of it. Our "hounds" never seemed to get wounded at all, but dogs which will tackle a bear would probably think very little of an ordinary

village "pie." Well, next day, having finished all the "home coverts," we started to go farther afield and went right up into the forest. Such lovely pinewoods with thick jungle in the hollows, and the ground just covered with wild strawberries which we employed some of our staff to pick in bunches to amuse ourselves with while we were waiting for the beaters. Our luck seemed to have deserted us; bears there were, but the beats were too big, and none of them came our way till after tiffin one was being hunted around by our faithful dogs; he came past close to me, but it was too thick, and I could not see him, so I set off after him. He was travelling much too quick for me, and I was thankful to hear the report of the "Doctor's" rifle some way below. As no second report followed, I was in hopes he had got him, but I found he had not, in fact, that he had only just caught a glimpse of a black thing flying through the jungle with three yelling fiends after him. The bear did not seem to have been conducting himself with any dignity whatever, and to judge by the tracks which we went and inspected, he had been just chucking himself down the hill anyhow, perfectly regardless as to whether his feet or his head or any other part of his body reached the ground first, so long as he was able to keep the pace up. The beaters should have been in line behind him and been able to keep him forward, but, as soon as they hear a shot and imagine a wounded bear, they have no object in life beyond the nearest tree that is climbable.

Next day the "Doctor" left me and with him went the "General." I kept the dogs and the "General's" son to hunt



The "General's" Camp.

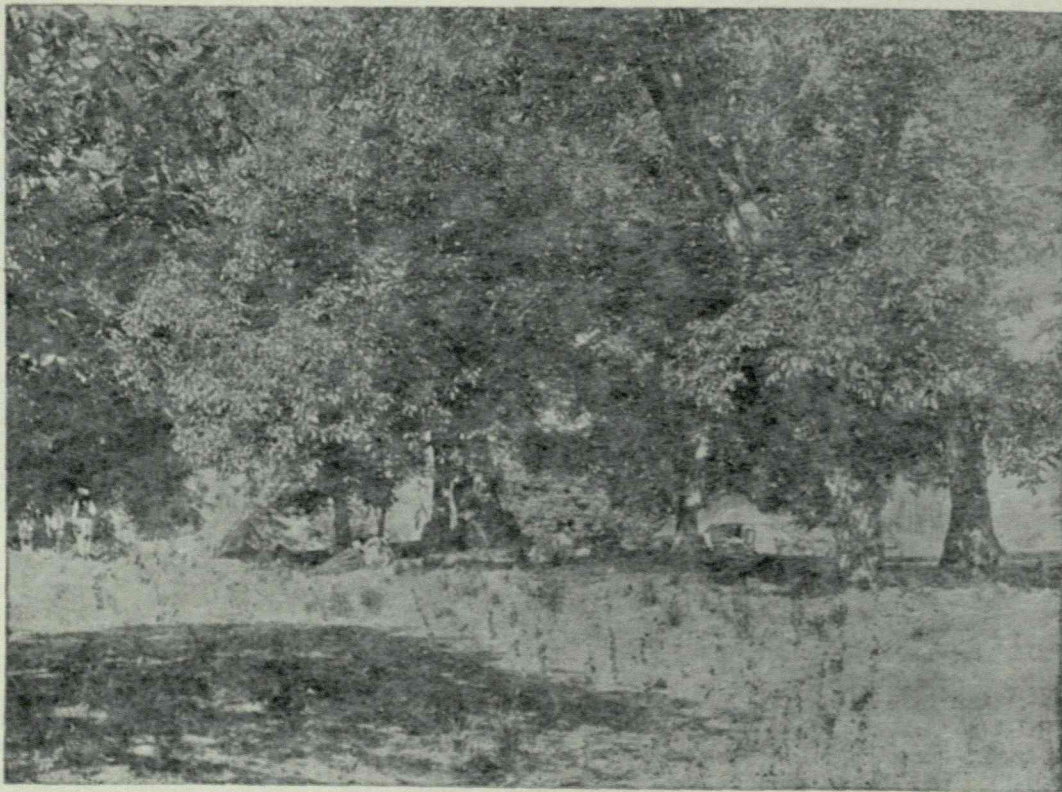


them, but it was no use. No one knew where to go, how to put the beaters in, or where to place me, and in huge tracks of jungle like that it is perfectly useless to try and make any arrangement, unless there is some capable man who knows the place thoroughly. Bears were put up, but they never came my way, and on the third day I got on my pony and rode off to the houseboat.

As we had still a week to spend before we wanted to go elsewhere, I determined to take the "non-shooting-portion-of-the party" up to see the pine forests, and we went. The *shikari* said there were bears in large numbers, so we engaged beaters and went daily to look for these numerous bears. We enjoyed many a pleasant chat, ate strawberries, had tiffin in some most lovely spots, took some photographs and enjoyed ourselves most thoroughly, but we never saw a bear, till on our return journey, we camped at the same place where the "General" had first taken me to. Here I determined to have our last try. I arranged the beat carefully, and then went and stationed myself exactly where the "General" had put me, arranging my wife comfortably behind a tree close by. Soon the excited yells of the beaters indicated that there was a bear on foot. I had sent my *shikari* with them this time, and he seems to have been able to induce the beaters to remain on the ground and attend to business, instead of playing at being monkeys in the trees; it took a long time, but they advanced steadily and managed to keep the bear in front of them. At last they got so close that I thought it was impossible there could be a bear between them and me;



though the jungle was so thick, it was quite absurd to expect to see him till he came right out, and the row was too great to hear anything. I was carefully watching where I expected him to come, when a signal from my wife made me turn to look behind me; there he was stealing away not twenty yards off, and a huge big brute he was. I suppose I was in too great a hurry, not knowing how soon he might vanish again into the bushes. I snapped at him and somehow missed him clean; the left barrel was more successful, and he came down a yard or so, but recovered himself, and with a very audible curse made tracks. I started down into the jungle after him, reloading as I ran, and calling to my wife on no account to leave the ridge of the hill, as I considered she was quite safe there. I did not calculate, however, on the bears going about in couples. Scarcely was I well out of the way, than out came a second bear within ten yards of her; fortunately, it passed without noticing her and vanished. I was meanwhile full cry after the wounded one. I could not get another shot, though I caught a glimpse of him now and then, and was able to run on sight for a bit, but soon we lost him and had to start tracking. This was easy enough, for he was bleeding freely at first, but presently the blood seemed to stop, and our progress was slow, so I left the work to the *shikaris* and returned to where my wife was for tiffin. I was very sick at having missed such an absurdly easy chance, but she was perfectly confident that we should get the brute. After tiffin and a smoke, I sent my wife back to camp in her dandy with a bodyguard of some of the beaters and a



Walnut-Tree Camp.



shikari, and took up the tracks again. After some very hard work, we got blood again, and this time small drops of black blood, so I thought we were sure of him. Night came, however, and we had to give him up. I sent off a man to fetch the dogs which had returned to their home about six miles off. Coming during the night, they were ready for work in the morning, but it was too late—the scent had gone, and they could do nothing. We should never have seen him again, had not a villager chanced to see him lying dead under a bush about two miles from where we left the tracks. News was brought to me, and our bear was retrieved. “All’s well that ends well,” but it was a lesson to me not to leave a lady undefended till I am quite sure there are no stray bears floating around; they can be very nasty at times, and this year several natives have been badly mauled without provoking the beasts in any way; the last was a dāk-runner near Gulmurg, who had his cheek torn right away; they nearly always seem to go for the head. I have seen several natives who have been mauled by bears, and in each case it was the face that had suffered. Black bears are still fairly plentiful in Kashmir; they are not nearly as cute as other big game one shoots there, except as regards their habits; and instinct seems to have taught them that the thicker the jungle they live in, the less sportsmen and rifles they are likely to meet; also that food is just as nourishing and much more safely obtained by night than it is in daylight.

The “Durbar,” in framing the new game laws now in force throughout the Maharajah’s dominions, seems to have realized that

bears are quite able to look after themselves, as no close time is provided for them, nor is any limit put to the number which may be shot by one sportsman as is the case with Ibex, Bara Singh, &c. The only law which applies to them is that a license has to be obtained. Any one holding this document can shoot as many as he can, but here Nature steps in, and one has to decide how one is to try and out-manceuvre instinct.

They have had to stand a lot of shooting by visitors to Kashmir; the natives do not trouble them much now, as they cannot sell the skins, nor do they eat the flesh. They are harder now to find because cultivation has been so much extended within recent years. What used to be virgin forest is now fields of Indian corn. The Kashmiri, though he used to be lazy and lethargic when his labours were for the benefit of others, is quite game to work when he finds it means rupees and comfort to himself. This is the result of Mr. Lawrence's admirable settlement of the land question in Kashmir. The peasants have at last realized that, thanks to Mr. Lawrence, an old Kashmir proverb in which they must have been beginning to lose faith, is once more a true saying, and that—

“Yus Rarik gonglu, sui Rarik Rae”

(he who sows shall reap)—as regards bear shooting this is not an improvement, for the natives are working in their fields close up to the forests till it is quite dark, and bears have had to put back their feeding hour.

It is very easy to find localities where black bears are plentiful, and to see their footprints and the broken down mulberry



Our Bath.

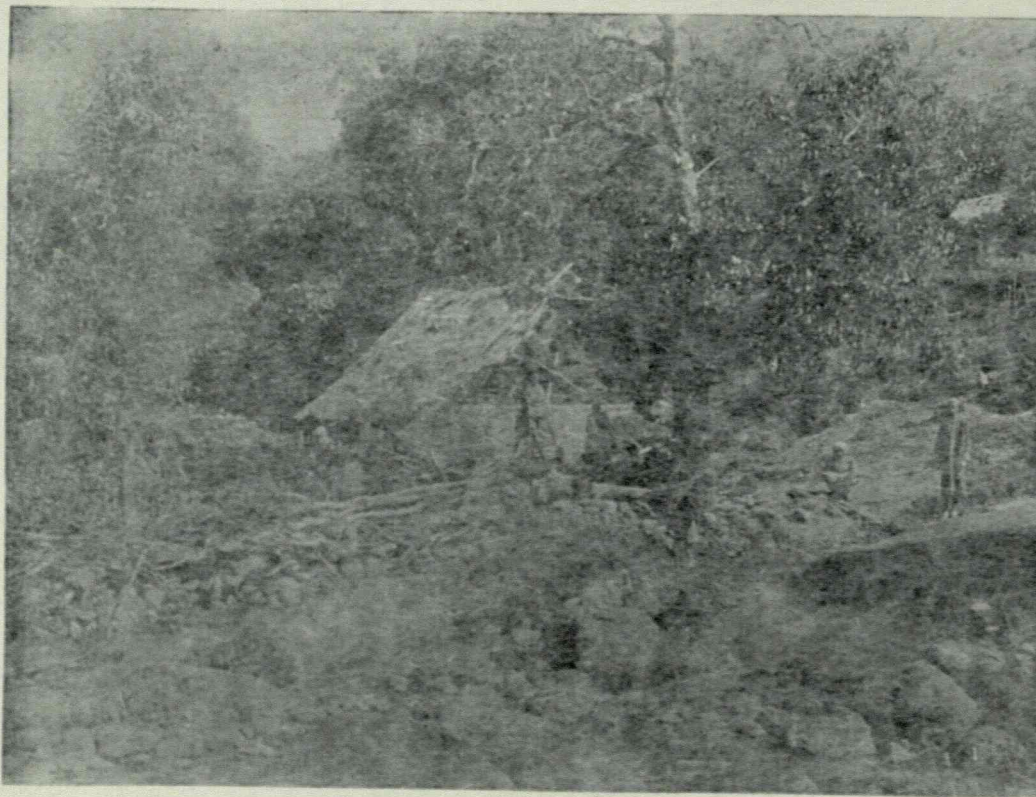
trees in which they have been spending their nights, and so satisfy oneself that bears are about somewhere. The next thing to be done is to find some means by which you can get near them while there is light enough to use a rifle.

It is a lazy sort of shooting ; one locates oneself at some point of vantage about an hour before dark, a book and cigarette do not interfere with sport, and the *shikari* will probably provide a leaf full of mulberries, or strawberries, or perhaps apricots if they are in season ; he himself sits patiently with the glasses glued to his eyes. I was comfortably settled like this last year one evening, my *shikari* on a bit of rising ground close by, when a little stone falling close by me attracted my attention, and the *shikari* indicated with his eyes that there was something to look at in the jungle-clad hillside. My glasses quickly took the place of my book, but I could see nothing ; I did not dare to move as I did not know how near the object of interest might be. The *shikari* watched intently for some minutes, then cautiously crawled to me, and pointed out where he had seen a bear coming down through the bushes, showing me where to watch for him. Presently a black thing was visible where the bushes were thin, coming rapidly down the hillside, it vanished behind a mound ; all my impediments were gathered up, and in a moment we were running for a place where the ground was broken. Up we crawled as quickly as possible for the light was failing, and got behind a big stone close to the jungle. No bear was to be seen anywhere ; both our glasses were busy. Suddenly my arm was grasped, and the *shikari* pointed to a certain place : I could see

nothing, but he explained in a whisper that the bear was up a tree feeding.

I saw the tree, but thought the black thing therein was only a heavy shadow and told the *shikari* so. "*Nai, nai, baloo hai*" was all the answer I got. I disputed the fact, for my glasses were good ones. Shall we creep closer, suggested my guide? Closer, indeed! The thing was't 50 yards off; could we expect to get closer without being seen? I wanted to *shoot* the bear not *catch* it. At last I solved the difficulty; there were not many more minutes of light so I told him, I see that black thing and can hit it, shall I fire? A satisfied nod, and my rifle was resting on a stone ready. The shape of a bit of the black thing was like a ham, and I concluded that, if it was a bear, that must be his shoulder, and aimed at it. Bang, a crash in the bushes, and what I thought a black shadow vanished. The place he had fallen was very thick; it was already dusk. I had previously had experience of a wounded bear at close quarters, and did not wish to repeat it; so we climbed up into the jungle above, so as to come down on him, but soon found a large splotch of blood which told us that he had been too quick for us, and in spite of his wound, had got off up the hill.

Following wounded bears in thick jungle even in daylight is dangerous work, but in the dark it is altogether a mistake, and we returned to camp. At dawn next morning we were off again, having arranged with some villagers to come and help us in our search, and to bring with them any dogs available. Loud whistling brought out a varied pack, savage looking, and savage



A Country House.

sounding enough for any wild job, but, unfortunately, they soon set to work settling private feuds amongst themselves, furious battles raged all round us, the vanquished fled home, and even the conquerors began to slink off as if they realized what sort of an expedition it was they were expected to take a leading part in, and at last we were left with only two; these were secured and led along.

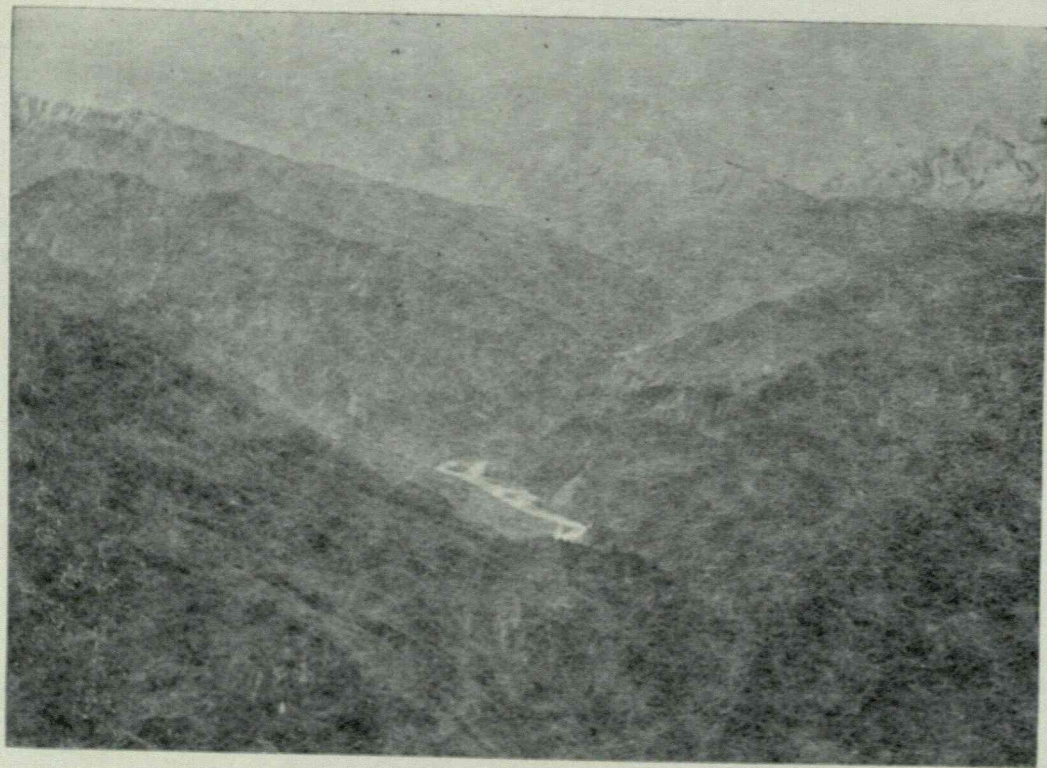
Arrived at the scene of action, they were put on the trial of blood, one took to it kindly but the other, after one sniff, recognized a formidable enemy, put his tail between his legs and fled. The tracking was no easy job in such thick jungle, and often the only way of getting up the hill side was snake-like on one's stomach. Two hours of toil and I had very nearly given up hopes, when our one dog help barked frantically into a bush, and the bear stood right up on his hind legs to show fight: he was only ten yards from me, but was down again and out of sight before I could get my rifle from the *shikari*. We urged on our dog, and once again there was a standing bear, this time I was ready, his white crescent made an ideal bull's-eye, and I dropped him dead.

In years gone by, when cultivation was more limited, one often had a chance of seeing them about the thin edge of the jungles, on their way to feeding grounds in the evening.

I remember when I paid my first visit to Kashmir in 1877, one frequently came across bears when on the march. My first experience of a bear was one evening when I had done my day's march, and was just sitting down to dinner, when news of a bear

close to my camp was brought to me. My first bear! All thoughts of dinner disappeared, and off I went. As is usual with the Kashmiri, who has no idea of distance, *close* was hardly the word that should have been used. We had to go a good mile and-a-half before we got to the place where the bear had been seen. This distance with my youthful keenness and the hope of getting a shot at a bear for the first time, was covered wonderfully quickly, but it was already getting dark and we could not see him anywhere. The wind was right, and I carefully crawled from bush to bush towards the place where he had been seen; suddenly I saw the great black brute on the other side of the bush behind which I was crouching; he had evidently seen me also, could not quite make me out, and seemed inclined to have a nearer inspection of this funny fellow, who, I suppose he thought, wanted to have a game at "peep-bo" with him! However, I thought he was near enough, and guessing as near as I could in the dark where his shoulder should be, I let drive at him; down he rolled to the bottom of the bank, then he seemed to find he was not as bad as he first thought he was, and bolted up the other side, where he got my second barrel and fell back a yard or two but recovered himself again, and bolted, making an awful row, which I had no doubt in his language was "swearing horrid"; it was too dark to follow, and I had to go back to camp very much disgusted with myself without much appetite for my dinner left.

That was my first bear; another one which I met on the march, came very near being my last, as she very nearly made



Mountain Solitudes.



an end of me. Two of us were marching together, when a bear and two cubs were sighted ; we tossed up who was to go after her, and I won ; so my friend went up the opposite hill to watch the fun with his glasses, while I started on my stalk. The family had moved, and we came upon them suddenly ; they were about 120 yards up a smooth grassy slope. One is always told that one should not fire at a bear that is above you, as it is sure to charge, but I have never as yet heard of any one who has acted up to this rule. I fired and hit her in the neck, or rather my bullet struck where her neck ought to have been, but one of the cubs must have been taking a ride, for the bullet (a .500 express expanding one) went through the cub and into the mother's neck in two bits. She gave one roar by way of announcing her determination and made straight for me. I waited until she was within fifty yards before firing my second barrel, but missed her clean ; turning round to take my second rifle from my *shikari*, who should have been at my elbow, I was horrified to see him off up the hill as hard as his legs could carry him ; so there I was with a bear at thirty yards, coming like a locomotive engine, and empty rifle, and a precipice just below me. I called to the *shikari* to fire and ran as hard as I could at an angle up the hill, so as to give the bear the disadvantage of having to turn on the steep slope. This happy thought saved me ; the *shikari* fired but missed ; his bullet went past my head with a ping almost worse than the bear's roar ! As I ran I loaded and certainly two cartridges never found themselves in a rifle quicker ; closing the barrels I turned and the bear was at me ; I had only

time to shove the rifle out at arms length right into her and fire ; she made one claw at me and scraped out about two feet of turf within six inches of my feet, before retiring over the precipice ; we found her afterwards about a mile below. It was the last day *that shikari* went shooting with me ! We went up to see what



A Waterfall.

had become of the cubs : one was lying dead, and the other we found after a bit of a hunt ; the little beast fought like a demon, but eventually I got my coat thrown over him, and we brought him back in triumph to where my friend was waiting for me. He had been watching through his glasses and told me he thought nothing could save me ; I am sorry to say also, he confessed that the first idea in his mind was " what a nuisance it will



be taking his body into Srinagar"! Our little pet (?) afforded us considerable amusement, and our servants' considerable annoyance, during the rest of our march; we fed it on cherries and other fruit, and it was very amusing to see it sitting as meek as a lamb, eating the cherries off a branch till there were only two or three near our hands left, then the old Adam (or rather I should say the old devil for Eve must have had a bad time if Adam had a temper like that beast) came out and the little fiend used to chuck the last two or three cherries on the off chance of getting a bit of our hand. It took two coolies to bring this dear little baby along, for, when led by one man only, it used to spend all its time in going for his legs; eventually it was found with its throat cut one morning, and the servants said it had committed suicide with its own claws. I did not, of course, believe it, but said nothing, as we had had about enough of the dear little pet and its eccentricities.

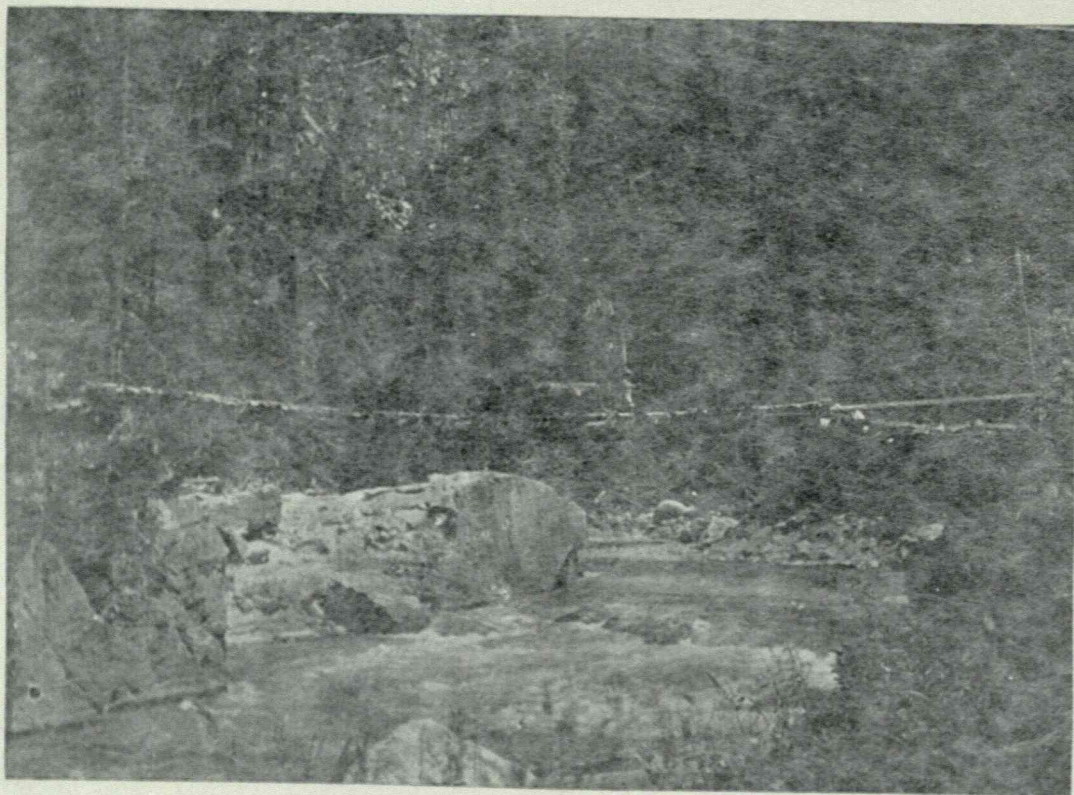


CHAPTER VIII.

A MYSTERIOUS LEOPARD.

LEOPARDS are shot sometimes in the valley; I mean the ordinary leopard,—not the snow leopard which, though of course rare, sometimes falls to the lot of lucky sportsmen who are able to penetrate to the more remote ibex or markhor ground; but even the common leopard is seldom found now. The inhabitants naturally regard him as their most deadly enemy, for he lives chiefly on their goats, and they hunt him in winter with dogs, and watch with such guns as they have for days and nights if necessary, not only is the killing of him a saving of their flocks, but there is always a something to be got for his skin.

I remember once when I was after black bear, a most sensational account was brought into my camp of the ravages of a leopard not far off. The story was so embellished by improbabilities that I was a bit suspicious, but, on the other hand, the men from the village seemed so anxious that I should go and shoot this beast, which they said prevented them sending their flocks up on to the hills, that I determined to ride over and see what I could make of it. From their account it went about like the biblical lion, roaring and seeking whom (goats, cows, &c.) it might devour; this was one part of the story that I did not

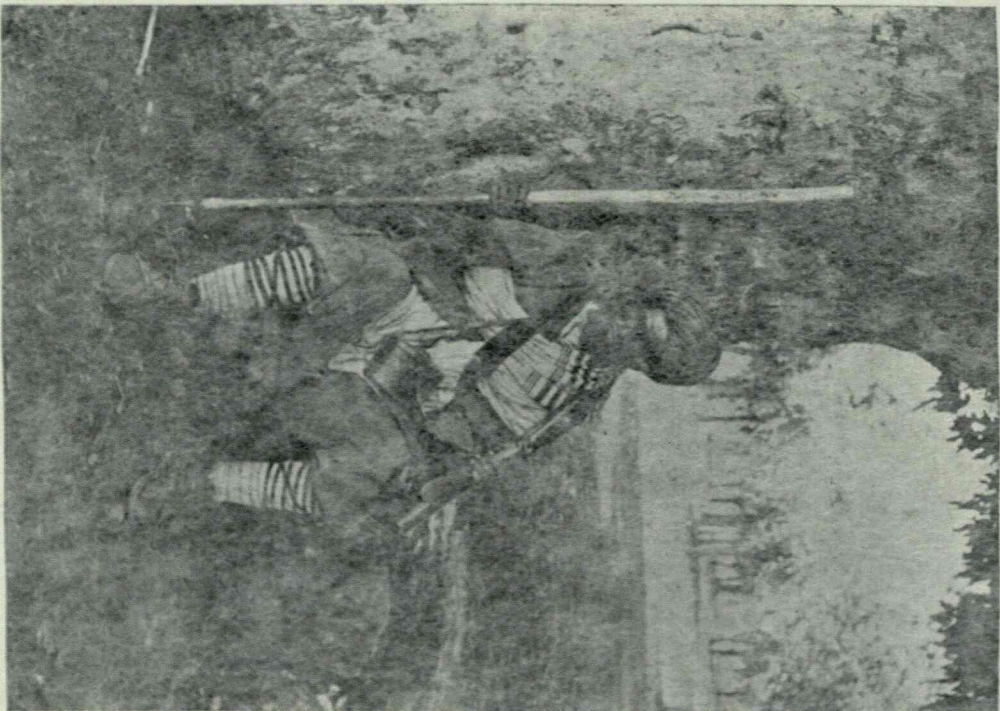


A Fir Tree Bridge.

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believe, for they said the roaring went on by day as well as night. I arrived in the neighbourhood of the village and had just settled myself down to afternoon tea, when a sound from the hill above made me jump; there was no doubt about the roaring, it went on for about three minutes, and feeding time at the Zoo was not to be compared to it. We captured a young goat and off we set, tethered our goat, and lay down behind a bush to watch; there we remained till dark, the goat held forth loudly, but no leopard came, nor did he roar again. Next morning we heard of a kill about ten miles off. I went to investigate and found it perfectly true; the beast had come down right into a village, taken a dog which had a litter of puppies in a hollow tree, and we saw its pugs in a ploughed field. This went on for eight days, every night I watched with goats tied up, and regularly every morning heard of our friend's doings miles away; he seemed a very Dick Turpin, always ready to prove an *alibi* by his rapid journies. At last I thought I had caught my scouts in a lie; they reported two cows killed ten miles to the south of my camp, the previous day's *khubber* being two sheep a good ten miles to the north of where I was. Quickly packing up a small tent and a cold dinner, I mounted my pony, and with the *shikari* on a village *tat*, we were soon at the kills; there they were, no possible doubt about it, within 20 yards of each other, and the marks of the leopard's claws and teeth perfectly distinct, not a bit of flesh had he eaten, only sucked the blood from the hole he had made in the throat; he seemed always to live on suction, for I never saw a



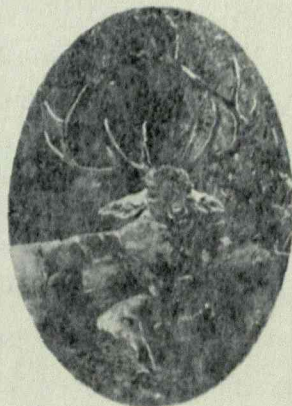
Shikari in Marching Order.



Tent on a Shepherd's Hut.



mysterious leopard, and, having heard of a kill many miles away next morning, gave him up as a bad job. He was a mysterious beast in every way, and at one time I was inclined to think there were three or four leopards about, from the amount of killing that was going on ; but in the end I decided that the natives were right, and that there was only one. Once I saw him, though I could not be certain at the time what it was. We were coming home late after one of the usual evenings in a tree ; we had stayed extra late as there was, or should have been, a moon ; the clouds obscured it, and it was pretty dark ; we were feeling our way along a small path, when suddenly what seemed a huge phantom-looking thing crossed in front of me. I had no time to fire even if I had known what it was. We crawled about the bushes for some time, but saw nothing more. Next morning I went up to the place, and close to found the pugs of a leopard ; they certainly were huge big ones, and I would have given a good lot even to have *seen* the owner of feet that would make such an impression ; but I was due at Sopur to meet a friend for some "houking," and had no more time to spare. As was his life, so was his death, a mystery. My *shikari* wrote me in March to say that a leopard,—*the* leopard he called it, and I expect he was right,—had been found dead in the jungle near where I was camped ; he said it was a very old one. The skin unfortunately was spoilt, but he had the skull, and is keeping it for me till I next visit Kashmir.



CHAPTER IX.

MARKHOR SHOOTING AND BARA SINGH.

My experiences of markhor shooting is limited, it never seems to have fitted in somehow, and I have little to tell; what there is and also some bara singh experiences cannot, I think, be better treated by me than they are in one of my "Kashmir Notes" written from the *Asian*, which I will reproduce.

Abandoning bear shooting for a time we went in search of a higher order of shikar, namely, markhor. I do not wish to detract from the sport afforded by shooting bears; it is sometimes pretty dangerous work, quite dangerous enough to be exciting, but I have never been quite able to make up my mind which is the legitimate form of black bear shooting. Shooting at night is a bit chancy, one cannot stalk or do anything particular to out-manœuvre the animal; one has simply to prowl about on the chance of meeting him, and then fire more or less at random; it is all luck, perhaps you see him and perhaps you don't; perhaps you hit him and perhaps you miss

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him ; given if you do hit him, it is pure luck if you kill him, you can't make sure of your shot. The only other way of getting black bear is by "banking" the jungles where he is taking his mid-day siesta, and driving for any game except, perhaps, tigers has always seemed to me a sort of illegitimate form of sport. It is something the same as fishing with worm as compared with fly. Red bear shooting is quite another thing ; you have a good climb, spot your beast from afar, circumvent him by stalking and shoot him if you can.

A few marches brought us to our markhor ground ; there was game, but it had been awfully disturbed by a previous visitor who seemed to have been located there for the purpose of getting rid of superfluous cartridges. According to the stories told by the natives, which may or may not have been true, neither the distances of the animals nor the length of his horns seem to have protected him from a bullet flying around somewhere in his direction ! As to what he shot we have only hearsay evidence which is not admissible in law, and should not be in sport, particularly when provided by natives. However, whatever the cause might be, the game was all on the move, and it was days before anything could be satisfactorily located. Luck seemed against me, and when some good heads were reported, fever made it impossible to go for them. While the *shikari* was away searching the neighbourhood a villager brought in *khubber* of a markhor ; his account of its head was such that fever and all I had to go for him. According to that inventor of fiction, never had such a markhor been seen before. His statements seemed a bit stiff ; but, on the other hand, the confident way in which he speculated on the enormous *bucksheesh* he was likely to receive in the event of the *sahib* making a good shot, rather tended to convince one. He seemed to think it certain the shot would be fired, and that it only depended on whether that shot was accurate ; if it was, the rupees were as good as his. We had not far to go, and in a little over an hour the resting place of this lordly animal was proudly pointed out by the guide and our

glasses were soon at work spying ; he was spotted resting in a most suitable place for a stalk. The stalk was made ; not more than 140 yards separated us from this prize ; one last look through the glasses rather raised suspicions in my mind ; he was lying, so was the guide ! amongst some rocks, and I could only see portions of his body and the tips of his horns. What I could see did not tend to convince me that he was as big as the villager reported him to be. I felt inclined to try for a nearer inspection, but the ground was unsuitable, and his shoulder being clearly visible I accepted the man's statement and fired, unfortunately only too straight, for I found that, instead of obtaining a prize, I had shot an animal with horns that any sportsman would be ashamed to bring home : they only measured—well it is unnecessary to say what they did measure. The guide seemed to realize the situation at a glance, and beat a somewhat nasty retreat leaving my gun coolie to conduct me back to camp.

My fever being persistent, and my disgust considerable, I struck camp and made for Srinagar. Feeling fit and ready to take to the hills again, I held a council of sport with the *shikari*. One district I was particularly anxious to see he informed me was closed ; this, of course, I knew perfectly well, and that probably was the reason which made me want to go there. As the end of August is a time at which there is not much sport to be had, and not wishing to run the risk of getting my *shikari* into trouble, I sent him to his village for a fortnight's holiday and started on my own hook to satisfy my curiosity. The district, the name of which it is not necessary to mention, was soon reached, willing guides were procured, but they represented that the head man of the village would be bound to report my presence to headquarters and to do their best to prevent my passing. The guides, therefore, proposed that we should avoid villages and roads and make our way across the hills where we would not be noticed. I did not wish to break the game laws by shooting in this district, and this idea of, so to speak, stalking the shooting ground, seemed a novel piece of excitement and rather took my

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fancy. Carrying only the absolute necessities of life, and taking no tent, we started. Most of the marching was done by night and had more novelty than comfort in it. Crossing rivers in the dark, climbing hills where one could not see where one was going, was quite a new experience, and the feelings were those rather of a fugitive flying from justice than of a man in search of pleasure! We got to the ground uninterfered with and found game simply in abundance. There were ibex and markhor practically on the same ground, some with very fine heads; not to mention red bear of which we saw quite a number. I fear I should have been tempted to have a shot or two in spite of the laws, only our provisions had been nearly exhausted on the march—I had only just enough to last till we got back to camp, and there was no means of replenishing our supplies, so we retracted our steps.

The next expedition was destined to prove more fortunate than the markhor one. The Lidar Valley was the district selected, and the game hoped for bara singh; it was still early in September, and consequently there was no need to hurry; on the other hand, there was every temptation to dawdle, as any one who has ever been up the Lidar Valley will readily admit. Kashmir was said by the Persians in olden times to be "equal to Paradise"; in that case the Lidar Valley must be equal to the Garden of Paradise; it was thus described the other day by a visitor. This is a garden, said he, to the *tehsildar* of a village, waving his arms round enthusiastically. "Ha sabib," replied the man in a matter-of-fact way, for they were standing in an orchard at the time! I have often wondered if the inhabitants realize what a lovely country they live in. I do not think they do; but I am wandering from my subject.

As a rule it is October before one can expect to get bara singh with "clean" horns; the *shikari* went on ahead to prospect, we followed leisurely. After a week he met us with the pleasing information that he had seen a fine "beast" at a place about 30 miles off. Naturally this news put an end to lazy marching as there were other sahibs in the neighbourhood who might get

khubber and forestall me. Starting off at daylight the next morning, with the lightest possible camp kit, that evening found me in camp within three miles of where the stag had been seen. Next morning I had the satisfaction of seeing the spoor which convinced me that my *shikari* had brought me after something worth shooting ; but my time was not yet, for five days did I cautiously prowl about the jungle, seeing his footprints daily, and on two occasions hearing him crash through the jungle, but not a glimpse could I get of him. On the sixth day we tracked his fresh spoor in the morning which led into a likely bit of covert for this mid-day rest. The *shikari* followed a bit further, and on his return seemed full of confidence, saying that, if I would rest there for the day, he would promise me a shot in the evening. I did so ; in the afternoon he moved me on to a place about a mile off ; here he told me to remain and indicated the direction from which the stag would come. What possible means he employed to come to this conclusion I cannot say, but he was perfectly correct, for about 4-30 I was startled from my meditations by the roar, grunt, bellow or whatever other word most suitable describes noise made by a stag when he “talks.” No one can possibly forget the impression made upon them when they first hear this sound. Although it is twenty-one years ago, I perfectly remember the first time I heard it at close quarters ; it was late in the evening, the twilight fast falling in the jungle, and everything perfectly still. In this stillness arose a weird prolonged cry, something between the roar of a charging tiger, the moan of a big steamer *Syren*, an elephant’s trumpet, and the stop used by an organist when he wishes to represent distant thunder ! This may seem a somewhat confused medley of sound, but it describes as well as anything else a noise that is incomprehensible to one who has never heard it. But to return to our stag. Twice he “bellowed,” a few minutes afterwards out he stepped ; even an old hand at *shikar* need not have been ashamed of a tremor of excitement, for he was indeed a lordly animal, and I confess I felt my heart beating as I cautiously brought up my ‘577. I may have fired

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a bit quick, but thank goodness my trusty old friend did not fail me ; the bullet went home clean and down went the monarch of the forest ; we heard him crashing through the bushes down into the ravine below, and, dreading any possibility of losing him, we made haste to follow, and were soon relieved by seeing a crumpled up mass lying against a fallen tree. After thoroughly inspecting the horn my verdict was "and behold it was very good." I sat down, lit my pipe, and gave myself up to thorough and unmixed enjoyment. Such a trophy was worth coming all the way to Kashmir to obtain, even if it had been the sum total of my bag. Ill-luck, however, had not altogether forgotten me, for the second *shikari* who was carrying my '577 fell and much to my disgust smashed the stock. This stock, I may remark, was afterwards replaced by one made by Ameera, the gunsmith at Srinagar, at a cost of Rs. 25 ; the wood used was walnut, perfect in every way, and the new stock, as regards weight, length and bend, an exact copy of the old one ; no European maker could have reproduced it more faithfully. I determined to leave the stag as he fell in order that I might come up and photograph him in the morning. I put two men on guard, and, having metaphorically patted myself on the back, and feeling at peace with all men, I returned to my small camp and contentedly enjoyed my dinner, which, if this was written by the author of "Farthest North," would probably be described as follows : *Potage à la Maggi* (my last packet was used to celebrate this occasion), *moorgie en cutlet*, *moorgie en kari*, my zealous cook in his enthusiasm had provided also a roast *moorgie*, which he produced with a grin, but he retired crest-fallen to ruminate over the marvellous command of language which his master seemed to possess. A stew of *cobanies* (dried apricot) met with a more favourable reception. All this was washed down by a bottle of excellent Murree beer, and a nip of whisky afterwards just to wet the "beast." Having lit my pipe, I gathered round the camp fire and located myself to a song or two. "What shall he have that killed the deer" having been

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rapturously encored, the only thing left in my repertoire was "God Save the Queen," which reminded me that it was time to turn in. Next morning a photograph was taken, the stag skinned, and the meat brought into camp; the "hallall" ceremony had been duly performed; possibly correctly, as the performer reached the animal a little in advance of me. When I came up I must say I did not see much signs of the vitality which is necessary to exist when the ceremony is done; but the man was right; it would have been a pity to waste so much good meat. For two days my retinue feasted and enjoyed themselves, I contenting myself with small expeditions in the neighbourhood. After this we moved on in search of other bara singh; tracks of one we did find, but, after some days of patient search, we gave it up, as he seemed to have left that nullah.

CHAPTER X. IN CONCLUSION.



If one is up in Kashmir for the whole season, the months of July and August are those in which least is found to do. If the expedition is purely a shooting one, probably all the ibex that one man is entitled to under the new game laws, will have been shot during the spring months.

Red bear can be got high up near the snows, but they also are best shot in the spring, when their coats are much thicker. Of course there is other game such as *ovis amon*, *ovis poli*, Tibetan antelope, &c., &c., if the sportsman is game to undertake such a long march as is necessary to get to the grounds where these animals are found. It will probably be found, however, pleasanter to take it easy and rest during these months. Srinagar is hot and unhealthy at this time of the year, but if a social life is desired, there is Gulmurg, where most of those who are not in for shooting, migrate to, and where a perfect climate and social pleasures are to be found. For those who prefer a jungle life, these months



may be very enjoyably spent marching in a quiet away, and seeing at one's leisure the lovely mountains and valleys of the country. There is also mountaineering for those who have a taste that way, and probably no country in the world provides better opportunities for this pastime. For this sort of marching when one is travelling for pleasure and not with the object of getting to a certain place as quickly as possible, it is best to take rather a larger kit, and luxuries, which, when shooting, one denies oneself. A few extra coolies do not cost much, and soda-water, Murree beer or a bottle of wine now and again, are often very acceptable.

Anyone who knows Kashmir at all will probably at once take to the grass shoes of the country, and a good supply of grass rope to make these should always form part of one's baggage. For climbing, particularly where there is much rock work, they are absolutely necessary; and even for ordinary walking, they will be found much more comfortable than boots, and less likely to produce sore feet; they wear out very soon, but as they only cost about a penny a pair, that is not of much importance. If one pair is not comfortable, it can be thrown away and another tried, or, on the roads that are much used, I have often been able to make an advantageous change with one some one else has thrown away; they are much better when slightly worn, and it is a good plan to make one of the servants wear them for a bit the night before a new pair is put on. The *shikaris* always occupy themselves with the making of these round the camp fires at night.

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Amongst the glaciers, there are in places curious little lakes ; one I remember going to, it was a long climb with a good deal of ice work, for which one was well repaid when one did arrive ; it was both curious and beautiful, a sort of arm of a large glacier, which ended abruptly in a small lake with miniature icebergs



A Mountain Road.

floating about in it. At one end it had a glacier which ended in a very pretty wall of blue ice about twelve or fourteen feet high, and the snow came down to the waters edge all round. I cannot understand why the water was not frozen. In some places there was a thin coating of ice, but not all over, and the reflections in the water, which was quite blue, were truly lovely ; my aneroid registered rather over 14,000 feet, at which height one would

certainly expect to find ice and not water. We rested up there for tiffin, and the view was something most superbly grand; nothing but snow and ice and perpetual snow mountains all round us, varying from 18,000 to 20,000 feet, and in the distance that grand rocky, snowy peak Nanga Purbat. I was sorry I



Glacier Near Gilgit.

could not exactly locate this glacier, for I should like to know if others who have travelled in these parts have seen it. I had no reliable map with me, and the names given by the natives differ so completely from any in a map, that I had to give it up as hopeless, and except that I was about due north of Srinagar, north of the district marked Tillail, and south of Astor, I know nothing.



Kashmiri Goats.



The herds of goats one meets are quite a feature of Kashmir ; sometimes there cannot be less than a thousand in one lot, and they are moved about from place to place, going higher as the new pastures appear from under the melting snow. They are beautiful animals, with long silky hair of almost every colour,—black, white, fawn, and prettiest of all, a bluish slate colour ; they are very tame and friendly, and on one occasion when I was marching and thirsty as usual, one allowed me to catch it and milk it myself. They are also most inquisitive, keen to investigate any camp they come across, and will sample almost everything they can get hold of, soap evidently being considered by them to be a delicacy ; one also found something very attractive in the *Sketch* newspaper, for he came back time after time to take it, absolutely refusing to be put off with a copy of the *Englishman* which we had read.

Sometimes on the higher ground it is very difficult to find a flat space to camp on, and I have had to pitch my tent on the roof of a shepherd's hut, the hut itself being cut out of the mountain side, and built up of huge logs ; but this is a site to be avoided, for on this occasion although the human inmates had not occupied it lately, I was invaded by a perfect army of smaller occupants who gave battle all night and seemed to find great pleasure in having got hold of something tender, in the shape of a white man to feed upon.

The bridges are not always all that could be desired, and it requires a fairly good head to cross them ; two long fir trees thrown across from rock to rock, with a few of the thinner

branches laid across them, is all that the best of bridges are made of, whereas sometimes a single tree is considered enough.

Life in Kashmir is more like a dream than it is anywhere else; the perfect freedom, the moving about from place to place at will, and settling down one's movable house wherever one feels inclined to, amongst the magnificent heights or in the garden-like valleys. Talking of these reminds me of a friend of mine who, on arrival at his camp one evening, was interviewed by the headman of the village; my friend was a bit enthusiastic about scenery, and waiving his arms wildly round exclaimed, "*Ek to bugeechta hai*" (it is a garden). "Ha Sahib," replied the native, for they were standing in an orchard, and the man did not at all realize that my friend's ecstasies referred to the country, and not the actual place where they were. It is curious the natives do not seem to realize in any way the magnificent beauty of the country they live in. I once endeavoured to express my admiration to a Tessildar of a village, the situation of which was truly lovely. He replied, yes, that he thought there would be a good crop this year; his ideas evidently did not travel beyond the apricot trees.

Later on in the season, say the middle of October, sportsmen begin to turn their attention to barassing, for by that time one may hope to find stags with their horns free from velvet. Stags are getting very scarce now-a-days in Kashmir, and if a month's hard work is rewarded by one pair of decent horns of ten points or upwards, a sportsman is lucky. November is the best time to try for these magnificent trophies, for then the stags



are roaring, and one has a chance of a shot about dusk in the evening. The *shikari* by tracking should be able to find their haunts ; this having been done, one settles oneself to listen in the afternoon. They will probably begin "belling" half an hour or so before twilight, and it is then a question whether they are near enough to get at them, before it is too dark to shoot.

I remember one evening I was out on the listen for any that might be belling when it came with a suddenness that quite made me jump ; it was fast getting dark, and we had some way to go to get near him. It was not a stalk but a mad frantic rush through forest, down a place that was almost a precipice, where we simply threw ourselves from bush to bush, through a mountain stream we floundered, and up the opposite bank as hard as we could go. We had by now reached the place where the sound seemed to come from, and more caution was necessary. I worked my way up the bed of a dried-up stream, and at last lay gasping amongst the stones and wondering where the stag could be ; there was not more than five minutes' daylight left, and I had to see him then or never. We seemed to be in exactly the place we had heard him, but the jungle was too thick to see anything. At last, as I lay thinking, it struck me that I had read, as a boy, something in one of Mayne Reid's books about snapping a dried twig, probably making a wild animal move in thick jungle, and determined to try it. I had no sooner snapped the bit of wood, than in a moment the stag roared, evidently challenging, as he thought, an intruder on his preserves. He was not ten yards away from me, and the sound was something

awful ; more unearthly than anything I had ever heard, and it seemed almost to send a shiver through my body which a tiger's roar has never been able to produce, even though I have heard that at ten yards also. The sound directed me to exactly where he was, and I was able to make out the outline of his huge body. He was standing in the bed of the dried-up stream immediately above me, and I could just see his great head stretched forward, evidently listening. It was a grand chance ; his broad chest was straight above me, but there was a thick bush between us which might interfere with my bullet. At last I saw a clear space between two of the straight main branches of the shrub ; there was only about two inches between them, but the distance was short, and if I could just put my bullet between these, it would fetch right into his chest. I carefully drew up my rifle and fired ; there was a crash ; we were up in a moment and found the huge beast floundering about in his death struggles. The *shikari* got hold of one horn, and I of the other ; his strength was too much for us, and we had to leave go, and another bullet had to be expended on him before the "*halal*" ceremony could be performed ; he was a splendid animal and in grand condition—horns 43 inches round the curve, 40 inches across from tip to tip, and over 10 inches round the coronet. There was great rejoicing in camp when the meat began to come in, and as I was lucky enough to get another equally good one the next evening, there was feasting in my camp for some days, in which the villagers for miles round joined. It was a curious bit of good luck getting these two good heads, two evenings running, for I had then been a whole month

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trying for barassing and had only seen one, which I considered too small to shoot, much to my *shikari's* disgust.

After the barassing time comes the duck shooting, and for those who can stay on into December, there is plenty of this. Such, however, has never been my luck.

The close season for small game ends on the 15th September, after which date those who prefer the gun to the rifle have their chance.

The varieties of winged game are very numerous, but the trouble with most of them is that, though they are correctly classed as winged game, they use their wings much too little and their legs much too much; this remark applies particularly to the Chakor (Caccabis Chukar), which is to be found almost everywhere. They are larger than the English partridge, and nothing smaller than No. 5 shot should be used for them. They are to be found on rocky bushy ground, and may be seen scuttling from bush to bush, but it is very hard to put them up. One sees them sitting on stones, with their head and neck extended in the air, apparently calculating how near it is safe to let a sportsman come to them; and they look like distended champagne bottles. The best way to get them is to send a line of beaters to stretch right up the hillside, and post the guns forward wherever there is an open space. I have had many a most enjoyable day with them, but have never returned with a big bag. They are excellent eating and a most enjoyable change from the everlasting rooster, who seems to have to spend so much of his time hunting for food that he never has time to get fat.

One of the best days I ever had at Chakor was at the end of my last visit to the Happy Valley. I went out with a certain amount of uncertainty, as the only cartridges I had left were some old ones I had brought up to give my *shikari* to shoot doves for the pot with; they had been in my possession for considerably over two years, and had travelled about with me on various shooting expeditions. They were Ballistite powder, which I have good reason to know keeps marvellously in all climates, but still the constant changes of temperature which these cartridges had gone through was trying them pretty high. They were as good as the day I got them, and I made some excellent shooting. Certainly this Ballistite powder is a boon to men like myself, who prefer always to be rather overstocked than understocked with cartridges, for they never seem to go bad, and, in my opinion, hit harder than any other explosive I have ever used.

The ram chakor (*Tetraogallus Himalayensis*) is a noble bird, but it is not given to many sportsmen to shoot a great number of these. His habitat is amongst the wildest mountains, right up in the ibex ground; indeed, they interfere very often with a carefully planned stalk. Their weird, prolonged, clear whistle is a perfect joy to me, as one hears them far far away up amongst the rocks, in the early morning or late evening; there is something so very thoroughly of the mountain mountainy about it which makes one feel that one is in Nature's own preserves, and far away from worrying civilization. They are not much shot, for, as a rule, when any one is in the country they frequent, it is rifle game and not gun game he is in search of. I have often had



to lie and watch an old cock ram chakor for long, lazily going on with his weird cry, for the shrill startling whistle they make when they are disturbed will give warning to everything within ear-shot that there is danger about ; the only thing therefore to be done when they turn up in the line of stalk is to wait quietly till they move off.

Then, most beautiful of all, as regards plumage, is the Monaul pheasant (*Lophophorus refulgens*) ; it would be hard to imagine more beautiful colouring than that of the cock bird. They live in the highest forests and are very hard indeed to get at. The best way to drive for them is to place yourself in a *nulla*, at the top of which there is some likely ground, then send the beaters round. They will nearly always fly down when disturbed, and the pace at which they travel makes them by no means an easy mark, large though they are. Even the best of shots will probably be behind the first half dozen they fire at. One wants to know them a bit to make good shooting.

Besides these, there are other varieties of pheasants and jungle fowl, some of the latter having lovely plumage. There are also several kinds of pigeons and doves. The blue rocks live in large quantities up amongst the rocks, and come down in flocks to feed in the fields. Many a good evening's shooting have I had round about villages up in the mountains ; they seem to fly quicker than any other pigeon I ever saw. Sometimes, up amongst the rocks, one hears a swish and something passes, but unless one knew what it was, it would be impossible to say what



had passed. Doves are everywhere. I never cared about shooting them myself, but, in the interests of the larder, I sometimes used to give my *shikari* a couple of cartridges and tell him to bring me half-a-dozen doves. I never saw him for hours after, but he generally used to bring in four or five, having patiently watched till he could get several feeding in a line before he risked a shot.

Of water-fowl there are simply no end, of every sort and description and size, from the fine old grey goose to the little jack snipe. Sixty to seventy duck per gun is, I am told, a fair day's shooting in December; this is all, of course, shoulder gun shooting, not the indiscriminate slaughter belched forth from a punt gun. These are, I am glad to say, not used in Kashmir.

There are numerous birds of prey—eagles, hawks, kites, &c., besides, of course, the vulture, who is perfectly certain to make his appearance within half an hour of a kill. Wherever it may be, high up in the snows, or deep down in a thick jungle, the vulture manages to get his *khubber* somehow, and he is there. Besides all these, the country is simply full of birds of every kind and colour, and must be a perfect paradise for an ornithologist. The natives don't bother themselves much about birds, though they are fond of keeping singing ones, and a *chakor* or two are generally to be found in most villages.

Cattle being sacred in Kashmir, they are decidedly on the increase. It is a serious matter to kill a cow even by accident; in fact I once heard a *Tessildar* threatening a poor



[Phot. by Bourne & Shepherd.]

Baramula: Exit of the Jhelum.



The Commissariat got Loose.



wretched villager with most fearful tortures, in the shape of legal proceedings, because he had allowed a calf to be taken by a leopard. Possibly this was not as ridiculous as it seems, and the owner, though he can hardly have been an "accessory before the act," may, to a certain extent, have been guilty of culpable negligence, for I remember when I was engaged in hunting up evidence regarding my mysterious leopard, my attention was called to the way the calves were hobbled to prevent them getting away into the jungle, on account of the number the leopard had taken. One calf was free, and I asked why; my *shikari* laughingly told me, milk costs money; and I noticed that the free one was a bull calf!

And now we come to the last scene of all, and I must indent upon Messrs. Bourne and Shepherd for a picture of it, as it was raining when I passed through Baramula, and I could not photograph. It was a depressing day and quite in sympathy with my feelings, for I never leave Kashmir without regret. Some of the happiest days of my life have been spent there, and I hope ere long to see it again. Baramula is very literally the gate into Kashmir, for if the narrow gorge through which the Jaelum rushes just below the town could be dammed up, the wbole of the Valley of Kashmir would soon be formed into a lake, as it is supposed to have been in ancient times.

My yarn is told, my pictures are exhausted, and I can only patience of have plodded through my "Trip
ir" is n lame my descriptions of
y en, I have aroused a

desire in some of my readers to see for themselves this garden of the world.

Who has not heard of the Vale of Cashmere,

* * * *

Oh! to see it at sunset,—when warm o'er the hills

* * * *

Or at morn, when the magic of daylight awakes

A new wonder each minute, as slowly it breaks

Hills, cupolas, fountains, call'd forth every one

Out of darkness, as if but just born of the Sun.

When the Spirit of Fragrance is up with the day,

From his Haram of night-flowers stealing away ;

And the wind, full of wantonness, woos like a lover

The young aspen-trees, till they tremble all over.

When the East is as warm as the light of first hopes,

And Day, with his banner of radiance unfurled,

Shines in through the mountainous portal that opens,

Sublime, from that Valley of bliss to the world !

Moore's Lalla Rookh.

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